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Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-95-029
Monday
13 February 1995

Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-95-029 *13 February 1995*

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Arab-Israeli Talks

MENA Carries Washington Meeting Communique

NC1302110895 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0750 GMT 13 Feb 95

["Text" of joint communique issued by the U.S secretary of state; the foreign ministers of Egypt, Jordan, and Israel; and the PA representative "at the end of their meeting in Washington yesterday"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The United States on 12 February 1995 hosted a meeting in Washington to follow up on the 2 February 1995 Cairo summit that included the representatives of Israel, Egypt, Jordan, and the PA [Palestinian Authority].

President Bill Clinton, who was accompanied by Vice President Al Gore, addressed the meeting. It was attended by Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres; Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa; Jordanian Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti; Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning and international cooperation in the PA; U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher; and Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Viktor Posuvalyuk, who attended as an observer.

The conferees were briefed on the outcome of the Cairo summit hosted by President Husni Mubarak in Cairo. Building on that historic meeting, the five participants reaffirmed their determination to consolidate the breakthroughs achieved in the Arab-Israeli peace process, to overcome obstacles and disputes, and to push forward toward a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace in the region. This peace should be based on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 leading to a permanent reconciliation between the Middle Eastern nations enhanced by mutual respect in light of dignity, tolerance, cooperation, security, and peaceful relations.

To achieve this goal, the five representative parties met in Washington to work toward consolidating cooperation to support peace.

Since peace requires coordinated action, the parties agreed to explore practical measures in political, economic, and security fields as well as in education and cultural areas that have human dimensions.

The parties also agreed to meet whenever necessary to hold consultations and coordinate in these spheres.

The experts will pursue what has been achieved in each of these domains separately.

In the political area, the parties reaffirmed their strong commitment to honoring those agreements already concluded in letter and spirit and to accelerate the negotiations on all tracks.

The U.S. secretary of state explained the results that the Israeli and Palestinian delegations achieved today and the results were included in the communique. They represent an inseparable part of the communique.

The conferees welcomed the results reached by Israel and the PA and pledged not to hesitate in supporting the completion of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

The conferees expressed their appreciation for the continued implementation of all aspects of the Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty. They further expressed the hope that a peace agreement between Israel and both Syria and Lebanon could be reached soon, leading to comprehensive peace.

With respect to security, the parties agreed that there can be no genuine peace in the region without security and stability.

The parties declared that they are committed to combat all acts that aim to destroy the peace process, particularly acts of terrorism and violence, and to stand staunchly against and put an end to all such acts.

The conferees reiterated the Cairo summit's intentions and that by establishing security and economic prosperity and raising their nations' living standards, they are seeking an equal security and mutual trust on the minimum level of armament.

The conferees expressed their appreciation for President Mubarak's initiative to eliminate weapons of mass destruction.

The parties shall pursue a mutually verifiable Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical and biological, and their delivery systems.

In the economic area, they reaffirmed the importance of fostering economic development and investment in the region.

The parties agreed to support assistance to Palestinians and the development and strengthening of the Palestinian economy through various means, including the creation of industrial zones in the West Bank and Gaza.

The parties are committed to explore the removal of barriers to trade. They will also explore ways to promote liberalized trade between the parties and the United States.

In this regard, the parties expressed their appreciation to the United States for its proposal to extend duty-free treatment to products from industrial zones to be created in the West Bank and Gaza and the free-trade zones that might be established in Taba, Elat, and al-'Aqabah.

The United States will continue its consultations with all parties and with the U.S. Congress to discuss this issue.

At the same time, the conferees were briefed on the progress toward establishing a development bank in the Middle East, as such a bank may finance development projects and private sector investments.

To assert public and private participation as stipulated in the Casablanca Declaration, the four parties agreed to promote private sector projects.

The parties will cooperate with the private sector to render the economic summit, due to be held in the Jordanian capital Amman in October, successful.

Regarding the human aspect, the conferees agreed on the need to build bridges between the nations to surpass impediments, reach an understanding, and exchange information and expertise to confront common problems.

The conferees agreed to explore the possibility of devising new, more creative forms of cooperation in these spheres.

The parties pledged to work to ensure that there can be no turning back in the Arab-Israeli peace process. They agreed to do all in their power to work toward achievement of a comprehensive prosperity for all the people of the region. In this regard, they pledged their continued support for the efforts and contributions of the multilateral track of the peace process.

In light of our commitment to working toward establishing a comprehensive peace, the United States will hold talks with Russia, its partner in the peace process, the EU, Norway, Japan, and other regional parties participating in the peace process on ways to advance it and achieve our common goals.

Peres Comments on Washington Meeting, Syria

TA1202075495 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 12 Feb 95

[Telephone interview with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres, in Washington, by correspondent Karmit Gay, in the studio—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Gay] Good morning, or rather good evening to Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres, in Washington.

[Peres] Good morning to you.

[Gay] We have heard that 'Arafat was inclined to boycott the Washington meeting and reconsidered only in the wake of heavy Egyptian and U.S. pressure. What can you tell us about this?

[Peres] Nothing.

[Gay] You know nothing about it?

[Peres] It is not a matter of not knowing. I do not think it is my job to say anything about it. It is a matter between 'Arafat and the United States; we had no part in the pressure exerted on him.

[Gay] What can take place in Washington today which has not taken place in Cairo and at the Erez checkpoint?

[Peres] First, the Washington meeting is the continuation of the Cairo summit, where the parties decided to establish a forum of foreign ministers who would deal with the basic issues discussed in Cairo. There are some details that have hopefully been wrapped up, but we will see if this is the case tomorrow. One such issue is turning the Taba-Elat area into a free trade zone enjoying the status of the Israeli-American free trade zone. The same status will apparently also be accorded to the industrial parks. There is also a long list of practical issues. It is not merely an issue of what will be included in the statement, but also of what will happen in the background, for example, in the education issue. Some progress has been made on various issues; however, the work is difficult because it is like manna falling down from the heavens.

[Gay] Do you think that the difficulties in the negotiations with the Palestinians—stemming from the problems of terrorism, settlements, etc.—will be solved by matters such as education, economics, and industrial parks?

[Peres] In principle, it would have been much easier and preferable to bring work from Israel to Gaza and Judaea and Samaria instead of having Palestinians working in Israel. It would have also saved us a security headache. The problem is that this takes time. People do not realize how difficult it is to accomplish things, how hard it is to raise funds, build a park, or change a reality. This, however, is what we are trying to do.

[Gay] This takes time, indeed; perhaps it is necessary to change a reality, but meanwhile the situation on the ground is extremely difficult. What you are saying seems a bit far off.

[Peres] Yes, but terrorism and the intifadah existed before the Oslo process, just as there are such incidents in Lebanon. What do the two have to do with each other? The problem is that we have to continue the peace process while continuing to fight terrorism, and it is obvious that these two processes clash. This is no reason, however, for stopping the peace process, because if we do that we will be left only with the terrorism process.

[Gay] Mr. Peres, I want to ask you about somebody who will not be in Washington today, namely the Syrian side. This morning it was reported that al-Asad had told the Maltese foreign minister several days ago that after a full withdrawal he will maintain with Israel the same kind of relations that Jordan and Egypt have with Israel. Is this the statement we have been waiting for?

[Peres] No. We believe negotiations should be started with the opening positions each side deems appropriate. We cannot accept a situation where one side dictates to the other side its opening position. We are not telling Syria what to bring to the negotiations, but it cannot tell us what to bring to the negotiations. We should maintain the negotiations as we have done with other countries, where we agreed that each side would enter the negotiations with its own positions.

[Gay] Major General (reserve) Dani Rothschild, who is in the United States on behalf of the Foreign Ministry, has sharply criticized the Palestinian Authority [PA]. This accentuates the Israeli political debate currently being waged in Washington. What do you think about this?

[Peres] Look, there is room for criticism of the PA. It also criticizes us. In a negotiations process, the sides usually do not express satisfaction with each other. We too expect the PA to adopt a firmer and more practical position on various issues.

[Gay] I referred to the fact that Dani Rothschild had made these remarks in Washington rather than in Israel.

[Peres] I did not hear what he said. Usually Dani expresses himself very well. I do not know precisely what statement you are referring to, because I did not have an opportunity to review it.

[Gay] Mr. Peres, there is another thing that you can perhaps follow from Washington. We have heard that the prime minister is awaiting your return before he announces the appointment of new interior and religious affairs ministers. Meanwhile, there is an initiative to bring Ramon back to Labor, and there is a lot of talk about the possible inclusion of Ehud Baraq in the government. So far we have not heard your opinion on these issues.

[Peres] I believe that it is indeed the prime minister who should deal with this. I do not think that ministers, myself included, should make statements regarding who will and who will not become a minister. Naturally I speak with the prime minister about these issues, and I will continue to do so. But I do not think I should make public statements, because this would only increase the confusion.

I want to tell you that it is very difficult to accomplish what we are trying to do, namely, to change a reality which many years of conflict have practically turned into a concrete wall of great fear and suspicion. Nevertheless, I stand firm in my belief that we will be able to overcome. We will deal with all the difficulties. I also believe the government will overcome its problems. We should not get overly excited about all the public opinion polls and should not let them dictate our moves. Naturally we have to draw the necessary conclusions from SHAS's [Torah Observing Sephardim] decision. We cannot leave this issue open indefinitely; however, I will say what I have to say about this issue when I return to Israel in two days.

On 'Terrorism,' NPT Issues

TA1302070895 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 13 Feb 95

[Interview with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres by correspondent Arye Golan in Washington on 12 February—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Golan] Mr. Foreign Minister, is Israel making the implementation of the agreement with the Palestinians—for example, elections and IDF [Israel Defense Forces] redeployment—conditional on effective Palestinian action against terrorism?

[Peres] Definitely. There were two things. First, we specified what must be done. We said that we will judge things not by what is said, rather by what is done. Otherwise, we will be unable to return to the normalization of relations.

[Golan] So we will not proceed until concrete steps are taken by the Palestinian Authority [PA] against terrorism—imprisonment, prosecution, and prevention?

[Peres] More or less. I would say that we are waiting to see what the Palestinians do against terrorism. The resumption of the negotiations hinges on that.

[Golan] There was at least one harsh note in the meeting, namely the argument with Egypt over the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT]. You had a sharp exchange with 'Amr Musa, your Egyptian counterpart, over this issue.

[Peres] Yes, it was a sharp and difficult exchange; however, there is absolutely no change in Israel's position on this issue. Musa said that Dimona is very close to Egypt. I retorted that since the Camp David accords, there has been no change in the distance between Dimona and Egypt; there is no need to change the political situation, because there is no geographical changes. We do not intend to reopen the Camp David accords. These accords were signed with meticulous consideration given to everything included and omitted in them, and we see no need to change anything. I also said that Egypt faces no threat of destruction, whereas Israel faces such a threat from Iran and Iraq. We have also never declared we are introducing nuclear weapons to the Middle East. We only said that their fear is our deterrence. We have no intentions of unnecessarily allaying their concern. Incidentally, the Americans are not calling for any changes in our position.

[Golan] Egypt, however, is unconvinced. How will this conflict end?

[Peres] Look, Egypt will have to decide whether it renews its signature on the NPT or not. After all, it does not have to sign again; it only has to decide whether it is withdrawing its signature. If it withdraws, this will have serious repercussions for Egypt.

[Golan] Mr. Peres, prior to the meeting you told me there are many mines on the road to peace. Do you think that you managed to defuse some of the mines in this meeting?

[Peres] We defused some of them, but others remain intact. I do not want to create the mistaken impression that we solved all the problems. The fact that the forum was made permanent, that it was chaired by the President, that the United States guaranteed the inclusion of the industrial parks and the tourism cities of Elat, al-'Aqabah, and Taba in the Israeli-American free trade agreement—all these are very significant gestures which I greatly value. The fact that the meeting also dealt with education and culture is also novel; so there were some new elements here. The negotiations were quite difficult, lasting seven and a half hours without interruption. It was not easy, but I think some progress was made.

[Golan] Are you leaving a bit more optimistic?

[Peres] I have always been optimistic; I have never suffered from a lack of optimism. I do have the feeling, however, that we took another step in the right direction—although the big test is how to reduce the level of terrorism.

Musa Comments on Blair House Meeting, Peace, NPT

NC1302102495 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0805 GMT 13 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Washington, 13 Feb (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has said that the Middle East peace process is experiencing what he described as "a severe crisis" due to the obstruction of the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations on the implementation of the Declaration of Principles. It is necessary to resolve this crisis promptly, and this cannot be done without the honest implementation of the Declaration of Principles, he said.

In statements in Washington at the end of the ministerial meeting in Blair House last night, Musa said discussions in the meeting were very useful; they dealt with the peace process in its entirety, the regional situation, and the threats to the region, including the nuclear threat.

He said all these subjects were discussed very clearly. He stressed, however, that what is important is not the joint statement issued after the meeting, but the implementation of its contents. This implementation, Musa said, should not be limited to a certain aspect, but should include all aspects so that a fair and just peace can be reached.

The foreign minister said the obstacles that emerged on the Palestinian negotiating track are represented not only by the acts of violence, which have recently increased. He said the Palestinians also need to be assured that certain [Israeli] practices will stop. He noted expansion in the Israeli settlement activity in the occupied Palestinian territories. He said Egypt explained its position on this issue—namely, that a solution to the settlement problem can only be achieved through a complete halt to this activity.

Musa said that during the Washington meeting, he clearly explained that the peace process is now facing major obstacles as important as the successes in this process so far. This makes us recall the basis on which the peace process was launched in Madrid—namely, the exchange of land for peace.

The foreign minister discussed in his statements the renewal of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT]. He pointed out Egypt's call for ridding the Middle East of nuclear weapons. If we are talking about a new regional order, he said, this means that we should address the major problems, including nuclear nonproliferation.

He said Egypt is not against nuclear nonproliferation, for that is only natural. What is unnatural, he said, is to apply this to all sides but one; this is unacceptable, and needs to be resolved.

Musa said: The region cannot live under the shadow of a nuclear program, such as the one we are asking Israel to explain its position on, especially when we talk about a new regional order.

He said Egypt considers this subject as extremely serious. The region cannot live with a secret nuclear program, because this would lead to a nuclear race throughout the region, he said.

He said the Blair House statement issued yesterday reflects the concern of the parties and shows they realize the danger of this matter.

Answering a question, the foreign minister said economic cooperation in the Middle East should not preempt the peace process, rather it must be based on it.

He said if the objective is realized through the application of the land-for-peace principle and the exchange of justice for justice, then there will be readiness to move on to other issues, like economic cooperation.

He said this was Egypt's position from the beginning, a position that Egypt declared at the economic conference in Casablanca, Morocco, last year.

Musa said the absence of Syria and Lebanon from the Blair House meeting yesterday means that the group of countries that launched the peace process in Madrid is not yet complete. This group will not be complete unless Syria and Lebanon join in, he said.

The foreign minister said that the Blair House meeting is not a follow up on the Cairo four-way summit. There is an extremely important reason for this, he said, explaining that during the period between the Cairo summit and the Blair House meeting, a meeting between Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin failed. This meant the delegates to the Blair House meeting had to take this failure into consideration, he said.

He said the parties to the Cairo meeting can meet again. He added: This, however, does not mean that the Cairo summit has turned into something like an "organization," which is not going to be the case.

Asked about the Alexandria tripartite summit—which was held late last year among Egypt, Syria, and Saudi Arabia—and Israel's position on it, Musa stressed that the summit was an Arab affair and that Israel has nothing to do with it. He said the summit was held for the sake of Arab reconciliation and was meant to serve Arab interests.

He said the tripartite summit was in the interest of the peace process because the achievement of genuine peace requires a rearrangement of the Arab house.

Agreement Reached on Cement Shipments to Gaza

TA1302114395 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 13 Feb 95 p 1

[Report by Jose Rosenfeld]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] As the closure continued paralyzing Gaza and the territories, Industry and Trade Minister Mikha Harish and Palestinian Authority Economics Minister Ahmad Quray' (Abu-'Ala') yesterday agreed on solutions to enable the immediate resumption of cement shipments to the Gaza Strip.

The supply of cement to Gaza is essential, since construction is one of the few active industries in the area. [passage omitted]

Quray' said he had a very good meeting with Harish, but warned that "without solving the problem of unemployment, we don't see a good way to peace." He reiterated that the closure hurts the Palestinians the most and is a collective punishment. He noted that, for the short term, Israel needs to open its doors to employ Palestinians, since the industrial zones is a longer-term solution to Palestinian unemployment.

Within a week, a joint working group is to be set up to coordinate the establishment of industrial zones.

THE JERUSALEM POST has learned that Israel is proposing to use the model of the Free Export Processing Zone (FEPZ), with some modifications, for the border-area industrial zones, based on a Ben-Gurion University study.

The special zones would be managed by a joint Israel-Palestinian council, which would have the overall responsibility for developing and managing them. The council would collect fees from businesses located in the zone to finance its operations.

To encourage companies to locate in the zones, the government would give them the same benefits available in development zone A, and Israelis working in the zone would be entitled to the same tax deduction available to civil administration employees working in the Erez industrial zone.

Israeli law would apply in the zone, but personal income taxes would go to the PA, and firms would be exempt from company income taxes.

The areas would be established near the Erez and Nahal 'Oz junctions and would leave the Palestinians with an option to develop a parallel zone on their side.

Inter-Arab Affairs

Arab League Chief Views Lockerbie Crisis, NPT

NC1102131295 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0915 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] London, 11 Feb (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid has expressed hope that Iraq will announce a new initiative next month that could help advance efforts toward Arab reconciliation.

In remarks today to the London-based Arabic language newspaper AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid revealed that contacts are under way with the Iraqi regime to urge it to complete its implementation of the pertinent Security Council resolutions in order to advance Arab reconciliation. He added: I keep the Iraqi permanent delegate to the Arab League constantly informed of what is happening in this regard so that we can achieve this reconciliation, which now depends on Iraq's compliance with the international and Arab resolutions.

On the developments in the Libyan-Western crisis in light of Dr. Butrus—Ghali's recent message to the Libyan officials asking them to submit a memorandum to the Security Council with the new evidence acquitting Libya in the Lockerbie case, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said that he had received a telephone call from the Libyan secretary of unity. The Libyan official noted that his country will send an envoy to the Arab League for consultation on this matter. Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid pointed out that the reply to the Security Council will come from the seven-member Arab committee concerned with finding a solution to the Lockerbie crisis. He added: We are waiting for the arrival of the Libyan Government representative so that we can find a solution to this crisis peacefully and through diplomatic channels, particularly since Libya has no other option.

Asked about the purpose of his forthcoming trip to Syria and Lebanon, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid explained that the first goal is to follow up on the developments in the peace process involving Syria, Lebanon, and Israel as well as issues related to peace, including the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT], Arab reconciliation, and coordination at the Arab and international levels. He noted that he also intends to visit Jordan at the invitation of the Jordanian foreign minister to discuss the same topics.

Asked about Israel's refusal to sign the NPT and if the Arab League could play an effective role in this regard, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid stated that the issue of nuclear disarmament is a permanent item on the Arab League agenda. However, he added, this is not all we are going to do about it; we will reach a final decision during the March meeting [of foreign ministers], particularly since some Arab states may be inclined to sign the treaty even if Israel does not. That is why the final lines need to be drawn and positions need to be coordinated, since this is an integral part of the peace process, he added.

Speaking of Israel's attempts to promote the idea of Middle East cooperation, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid stressed that peace with Israel will not give rise to any Israeli economic edge or advantage over the Arab states. Instead, the Arabs will deal with it according to the criteria and rules that each Arab state adopts in view of its national interests. Thus, dealings with Israel will not be coerced or forced, he added. He emphasized that cooperation among the Middle Eastern countries will not materialize until a just and comprehensive peace is achieved, adding that such cooperation will be based on rules and principles of international law, and nothing else.

Islamic Affairs

Political Islam Review: 'AQIDATI 7 Feb

NC1102195495

[FBIS Editorial Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 7 February edition of the Arabic-language newspaper 'AQIDATI that pertain to political Islamic issues.

CONTENTS:

1. Alcohol Banned During Ramadan in Public Places
2. Belly-Dancing, Musical Bands in Iftar Banquets Go Against Ramadan
3. Video Game Arcades To Be Closed Down in Cairo District
4. Grand Imam Addresses Islamic Thought Seminar
5. Behavior of Actors in 'The Immigrant' Court Case Criticized
6. Muslims Should Exert Effort To Improve Image of Islam in West

ALCOHOL BANNED DURING RAMADAN IN PUBLIC PLACES

This issue of 'AQIDATI is largely dedicated to religious issues relating to the month of Ramadan. Page 1 carries a 50-word report on a decision issued by the al-Jizah governor in which he bans alcohol in public places during the month of Ramadan, allowing only tourists to drink alcohol inside tourist resorts.

BELLY-DANCING, MUSICAL BANDS IN IFTAR BANQUETS GO AGAINST RAMADAN

Page 1 also carries a 70-word report, which is elaborated in great detail on pages 4 and 5, about iftar banquets during Ramadan that are accompanied by a belly-dancer and a musical band. A member of the al-Azhar Fatwa Committee said such iftar "parties" "go against the spirit of this month, and should be abandoned out of a sense of duty."

VIDEO GAME ARCADES TO BE CLOSED DOWN IN CAIRO DISTRICT

Page 2 carries a 100-word report by Mustafa 'Alam-al-Din which notes that the Cairo governor has decided to close down all video game arcades that are widely spread all over Cairo and are breaking the law. In addition, no new licenses will be issued for new video game arcades in al-Jizah Governorate, which was the first to close down all such arcades.

GRAND IMAM ADDRESSES ISLAMIC THOUGHT SEMINAR

Page 2 publishes a 500-word report on a seminar on Islamic thought organized by the Presidency in cooperation with al-Azhar and the Awqaf Ministry. Grand Imam of al-Azhar Shaykh Jad-al-Haqq 'Ali Jad-al-Haqq opened the first session with a speech in which he said Ramadan offers Muslims the opportunity to review their behavior in the past year and rectify all mistakes they committed. He says: "Our first objective from such intellectual seminars is to rectify the wrong notions some youths might have, because Egypt needs its sons. We must take this opportunity to unite ranks, gather our forces, and make Ramadan the beginning of our correct future steps." The vice president of al-Azhar University also addressed the seminar, saying: "The nation's disputes and divisions put us at the end of the line of nations and cause huge cracks in our walls. These divisions and disputes are created by the enemies of the nation who have turned the jurisprudential interpretations into useless conflicts."

BEHAVIOR OF ACTORS IN 'THE IMMIGRANT' COURT CASE CRITICIZED

Page 18 contains a 500-word report on proceedings during the court session examining the case of the film 'The Immigrant' produced by Yusuf Shahin. The film has been banned in Egypt. The report notes the insensitivity of some actors attending the session, who smoked in public during Ramadan without taking into consideration the feelings of the rest of the people in the courtroom who are fasting.

MUSLIMS SHOULD EXERT EFFORT TO IMPROVE IMAGE OF ISLAM IN WEST

The 200-word column "Toward a Better Understanding" by 'Adil Dayf published on page 20 comments on the efforts Muslims should exert to take advantage of Western flexibility and change the image of Islam abroad, which is linked to terrorism. Dayf believes that the Americans in particular are ready to understand and change their attitudes about Islam, "on condition that the Muslim they encounter sets an example of how to apply correct Islam, not in words only, but in deeds." He believes that the basis for a better Western understanding of Islam lies in "our exerting efforts to clarify the facts of our religion, to explain that it is a religion of tolerance and forgiveness, not a religion of fanaticism and killing." He says this should be done through extensive media campaigns.

Palestinian Affairs

Reaction to Washington Meeting on Peace Talks

'Arafat Adviser Abu-Rudaynah Comments

NC1202075095 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 12 Feb 95

[Telephone interview with Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, adviser to Yasir 'Arafat, in Gaza, by Ramadan Husayn, in Cairo; date not given; from the "Dialogue From Afar" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Husayn] Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, good morning and welcome to the Voice of the Arabs.

[Abu-Rudaynah] Good morning and thank you.

[Husayn] Abu-Rudaynah, could you explain the current status of the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations in light of the recent unsuccessful meeting between President 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Rabin?

[Abu-Rudaynah] As you know, there has been a crisis over the past two weeks. President Mubarak's initiative led to the Cairo four-way summit. The Egyptian initiative was the first serious attempt to rectify the flaw in the implementation of the Declaration of Principles between the PLO and the Israeli Government. At the Cairo meeting it was agreed that President 'Arafat and Rabin meet again on the Palestinian-Israeli border. No progress was made in this meeting and there was no agreement on anything. Yesterday attempts were made to hold a meeting of the foreign ministers in Washington. Egyptian and U.S. efforts, through direct contacts between President 'Arafat and the Egyptian leadership and between 'Arafat and Warren Christopher, led to a decision to send the Palestinian delegation to Washington to follow up on what has been agreed.

The Palestine issue is now experiencing complicated and delicate circumstances. The Israelis are still slow in implementing the agreements; they are not implementing what has been agreed on and are still obstructing the implementation of all the agreements. We hope the Washington meeting today will help put things on the right track.

[Husayn] What was the content of the contacts President 'Arafat held with President Mubarak and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher?

[Abu-Rudaynah] Those were direct contacts involving the three men to discuss the dimensions of the crisis. It was agreed, following Egyptian and U.S. efforts, to hold a Palestinian mini- cabinet session. The meeting was held last night. Following consultations it was agreed to send a Palestinian delegation to Washington carrying a draft plan to be presented to the foreign ministers.

[Husayn] Could you tell us about this draft plan carried by Dr. Nabil Sha'th, head of the Palestinian delegation to the Washington meetings?

[Abu-Rudaynah] This is a Palestinian paper that will be presented to the delegates. I think it is premature to discuss it now before the parties discuss it directly at the meeting. The Palestinians will present their view of how to get things moving [word indistinct] the need for a precise, honest, and speedy implementation of the peace agreements signed between the PLO and the Israeli Government. It is a draft plan calling for the implementation of what has been agreed upon and for putting things back on course.

[Husayn] The Palestinian cabinet met in Gaza last night to discuss developments. Could you please tell us about this meeting and the decisions made on the issue of negotiations?

[Abu-Rudaynah] Yesterday's extraordinary meeting was held to discuss a single issue, namely, whether the Palestinian delegation should or should not go to Washington to attend these meetings. As I told you, negotiations during the last meeting achieved no result and there was a question mark over the usefulness of these meetings. There were the blessed Egyptian contacts and goodwill efforts and the U.S. contacts, as I told you. Christopher contacted President Abu-'Ammar and Dennis Ross also contacted President 'Arafat several times. There was only one item on the agenda of the council meeting that night: whether or not we should go and the usefulness of going. The council agreed that the Palestinian delegation should go and take with it a draft decision for the foreign ministers to discuss. As I told you, the essence of this draft is the implementation of the agreements signed in Cairo, Oslo, and Washington between the PLO and the Government of Israel.

[Husayn] President 'Arafat appeared pessimistic following his meeting with the EU troika delegation and his meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin. Did President 'Arafat discuss activating the European role in the Middle East peace process and exerting pressure on Israel to implement the Oslo and Cairo agreements? What were the results?

[Abu-Rudaynah] The talks between the Palestinian delegation chaired by President 'Arafat and the EU delegation led by French Foreign Minister Juppe were successful and positive. The talks were important and all the problems facing the peace process were discussed. President Abu-'Ammar was clear, frank, and realistic and detailed the discussions at the Palestinian-Israeli summit. The European stance was one of understanding and was clear in viewing the issues in a way that made the Palestinian and European sides agree on a series of meetings to draw up plans to confront the crisis.

[Husayn] President Abu-'Ammar has said he is ready to halt the negotiations if necessary. Do we understand from this that the Palestinian side might make such a decision if the Washington meetings do not make concrete progress to activate the negotiations with Israel?

[Abu-Rudaynah] As I said, the Palestinian side remains committed to implementing the agreements it has signed. The Palestinian side is asking the other side to implement its commitments. The Palestinian leadership and President 'Arafat still believe that there is still much scope for the peace process and its success. We are committed to the peace process we have signed. The other side must respect and implement what has been agreed on and stop prevaricating. I cannot say more than this right now.

[Husayn] Do you believe the Israeli security demands are the reason for the stalled negotiations or do you believe there are other reasons?

[Abu-Rudaynah] There is Israeli dithering and procrastination. The Israeli excuses are always changing, sometimes they are security ones, sometimes political, sometimes internal struggles, and at other times the results of opinion polls. Different Israeli excuses are given each time. The Israeli stance is clear: Israel wants to prevaricate and gain time and does not want to implement what has been agreed on.

[Husayn] Thank you Abu-Rudaynah, President 'Arafat's adviser, for this dialogue between Cairo and Gaza.

[Abu-Rudaynah] Thank you.

Abu-Rudaynah Welcomes Clinton's Remarks

JN1302074395 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 13 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, adviser to President Yasir 'Arafat, has welcomed U.S. President Bill Clinton's statements at the opening of the Washington meeting about redoubling efforts to give momentum to the talks and to prevent further attempts aimed at destroying the dreams of the Palestinians. He added that President 'Arafat highly praised President Clinton's positive and constructive stand, which stresses the need for moving quickly to save the peace process and to give it momentum.

Abu-Rudaynah said: As President Clinton said, the peaceful political process is passing through a delicate stage. This, he added, requires U.S. intervention to save the peace process in the interest of all the peoples of the region so that just and comprehensive peace can prevail in the entire region. He added that this peace and its essence are represented by reaching a just solution to the Palestinian issues and achieving Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territory, including Jerusalem.

Abu-Rudaynah expressed hope that the U.S. Administration will translate this stand into actions on the ground to safeguard, as Clinton said, the pledges it made when it got involved in the peace process and made its moves to achieve peace.

Hamas Spokesman Views Meeting

NC1202185195 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 12 Feb 95

[Interview with Ibrahim Ghawshah, official spokesman of the Islamic Resistance Movement, by unidentified correspondent on 12 February; place not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Correspondent] Certain sources said that the quadripartite meeting in Washington will act as an Arab umbrella for the self-rule authority to adopt stringent measures against the Palestinian opposition factions, particularly the Islamic ones. Do you have anything to say about this analysis?

[Ghawshah] Certain information and indications show that Rabin had asked 'Arafat to immediately embark on a ruthless oppressive operation. We believe that Rabin's government will make the same proposal with U.S. support during the Washington meeting. But, as is known, this is a double-edged sword. In other words, if 'Arafat responds to this Zionist-U.S. pressure and starts to persecute the Muslim Palestinian people in the self-rule areas, nobody, even the U.S. and Zionist analysts and thinkers, can predict the consequences, particularly since the Palestinian people have not yet forgotten the massacre committed on 18 November 1994 or the vicious campaigns of arrest which involved well over 500 Palestinians in the self-rule area. Therefore, the Palestinian people will not allow the United States and 'Arafat to make them bow, because these people have been brought up according to Islamic teachings, and only bow to Almighty God.

[Correspondent] Well done, Mr. Ghawshah. Thank you very much.

[Ghawshah] You are welcome.

DFLP, PFLP: Meeting 'Cover' for Israeli Stand

JN1102182395 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP] and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] have announced that the Washington meeting [among the foreign ministers of the Palestinian Authority, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, and the United States] constitutes a cover for Israel's stand. A spokesman for the Unified Leadership of the DFLP and PFLP said that this meeting will come up with more Arab concessions and more Israeli gains.

Radio Assails Meeting's Objectives

JN1302102695 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1750 GMT 12 Feb 95

[Political commentary: "The Washington Meeting"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The administration of President Clinton has escalated its political moves following the Alexandria summit. The escalation was both in terms of time and place [word indistinct] the geographical and political area of the Alexandria summit. In other words, all these moves appear to be a studied, in- depth response to the Alexandria summit and its results. The other meaning of this, which might be emotional, is that the administration of President Clinton—directly and rabidly instigated by the Zionist lobby—fully stands against any possible collective Arab action, even if this is at the minimum level. Any such action is, first, not a condition of the proposed settlement; second, it would maintain the simplest principled stands in the face of agreements, liquidation, and deals; third, such an action would stand against normalization and against others' quick steps to enter the Zionist door; and last, such an action would charge the Syrian- Lebanese position with increasing power to stand against Zionist [word indistinct] and against what Rabin and Peres want.

The Alexandria summit was followed by the Cairo summit, whose major slogan was to combat terrorism. However, in its essence, the slogan has more than one meaning. First, combating terrorism not only means launching security and military attacks against those who oppose the settlement whether in Palestine, Lebanon, or elsewhere, but it also means confusing popular and official Arab political rejectionists and joining the Middle East economic market in an attempt to set up a new political and economic system that will quickly fall in harmony with the developing political movement and materialize in the proposed normalization projects.

Since all these are considered dimensions for combating terrorism, political activities continued. These began with President Clinton's statements and decisions, the meetings of the ministers of trade and economy, and ended with the ongoing Washington summit, which is attended by President Clinton and his secretary of state, although formally it is only attended by the foreign ministers of Egypt, the Zionist enemy, Jordan, and Yasir 'Arafat's protectorate.

Thus, the Washington meeting is a natural continuation of the Cairo summit, as well as of the American-Zionist political move in the region. In terms of objectives, the Washington meeting will not deviate from the objectives of the Cairo summit. It comes to form the tool which directly executes the resolutions of the Cairo summit. The reasons behind the Washington meeting and the other political activities could be many. However, the basic reasons is most likely the following: First, to besiege the decisions of the Alexandria summit; second, to besiege the popular and official forces opposing the known settlement; third, to strengthen the Oslo and Wadi 'Arabah accords and to pave the road of normalization in accordance with the Zionist enemy's concept; fourth, to pave the economic road for the so-called Middle East market which will guarantee the enemy's interests in the first place; and fifth, to address messages to Syria and Lebanon to make them accept the separate agreements imposed by the settlement.

These are the objectives of the Washington meeting, which are also the same objectives of the Cairo summit. Naturally, they are necessary preludes to the continuous plots being concocted in the American and Zionist quarters against Syria, Palestine, and the entire Arab nation.

God is with us and victory is imminent. Together on the path of liberating land and man.

Sha'th Denies Authority About To Collapse

JN1102202695 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1830 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning and international cooperation, has denied a report published in the London-based newspaper THE INDEPENDENT. The report was cited by the Gaza-based newspaper AL-WATAN in its issue published on Thursday 9 February.

AL-WATAN cited Dr. Sha'th as saying that the peace process has failed and that the [Palestinian] Authority is about to collapse.

Majdi al-Khalidi, director general of the Ministry [of Planning and International Cooperation] has explained that the AL-WATAN report was merely part of the campaign of doubt casting which is being pursued against our people and their national institutions as well as against our unique experience in terms of establishing the first authority. This authority still works to promote itself and its capabilities in a way that will serve the homeland's higher interests, he added.

Al-Khalidi said what AL-WATAN attributed to THE INDEPENDENT was distorted, inaccurate, and absolutely untrue.

Authority Council Issues Statement on Weekly Meeting

JN1102202095 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1830 GMT 11 Feb 95

["Text" of statement issued by the Council of Ministers "at the end of the meeting on the overall developments in the peace process"; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian National Authority [PNA] Council of Ministers held a meeting today under the chairmanship of President Yasir 'Arafat. During the meeting, the PNA Council of Ministers reviewed the overall political developments in light of the four-way meeting in Cairo, the economic meeting in Taba, last week's meeting between the president and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, and the political meeting to be held in Washington tomorrow among the foreign ministers of the United States, Russia, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, and the international cooperation minister in the PNA.

The Council noted, in light of the report presented by the president, that Israel intentionally works toward obstructing the implementation of the Declaration of Principles signed in Washington and Cairo. Its excuse at the beginning was that the dates of the accord are not sacred and that there is no need to hurry. Israel's excuses now are the acts of violence which took place inside

Israel recently and which are rejected and denounced by the PNA which does its utmost to stop such acts.

As the PNA Council of Ministers denounces the premeditated Israeli procrastination in implementing the accord, it believes that this procrastination, together with the Israeli practices, are a blatant violation of the accord and an attempt to impose hegemony over our lofty people. This has deadlocked the Palestinian track and threatened the entire peace process.

Imposing a curfew on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, as well as the failure to abide by implementing the second part of the Declaration of Principles—namely, redeploying the Israeli Army, holding legislative elections, and handing over powers in the rest of the West Bank—in addition to not releasing Palestinian prisoners and isolating the city of Jerusalem, require a reassessment on all levels to draw results and lessons in the political process.

In light of this, the PNA Council of Ministers reaffirms the following facts on the eve of the Washington meeting:

1. Making progress on the Palestinian track through implementing the second part of the Declaration of Principles constitutes the sound and real criterion for any progress in the peace process in the region on all tracks, proceeding from the fact that the Palestinian issue is the core of the conflict in the region. Nobody can ignore or bypass this fact.

2. The PNA Council of Ministers believes that the real cause of the rejected and condemned acts of violence is the continuation of the Israeli occupation and the Israeli Government's procrastination in implementing the accords on the agreed dates. This is in addition to its evasion of its commitments and pledges to stop settlements and land confiscation and to release the detainees, as well as the other measures which will result in achieving a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

3. The PNA Council of Ministers is studying Israeli the attempts avoid implementing the agreement and move toward the stage of normalizing relations with Arab and Islamic states and peoples, as well as nonaligned countries. The PNA Council of Ministers believes that this conflicts with the principles of land-for-peace and the international legitimacy resolutions, particularly Resolutions 242, 338, 425, and 904, and the Fourth Geneva Convention.

'Abd-Rabbuh Interviewed on 'Arafat-Rabin Meeting

JN1002205895 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1905 GMT 10 Feb 95

[Interview with Palestinian Authority Information Minister Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh by Salah Salamah; place and date not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Salamah] In light of this negative result, you personally said yesterday that the negotiations are passing through a real crisis. What are the prospects for overcoming this crisis, by what means, and on what basis?

['Abd-Rabbuh] I believe that if the current dialogue of the deaf continues there will be no way out of this crisis. The sponsoring parties must directly intervene. Last week, a quadrilateral meeting took place in Cairo. We presented the problem—that the process is reaching a dead end on the Palestinian-Israeli track. There was understanding by the Egyptian and Jordanian sides and there were demands that the Israeli government take speedy measures to implement the Declaration of Principles and the interim phase of the Israeli Army's withdrawal and holding the elections. I believe that there must be international intervention. Arab and Palestinian evaluations must be made of the prospects of this process in light of the ongoing experiment; that is, there should be a Palestinian meeting of the PLO Executive Committee and the PLO Central Council and all the PLO organizations and institutions to discuss this issue in depth, now that we have reached this vicious circle.

I also believe that there must be Arab meetings, irrespective of differences or past calculations—Egyptian, Syrian, Jordanian, and other Arab states like Saudi Arabia and others—to discuss this issue in depth because we are facing a situation with ever increasing dangers, a situation that could possibly lead to an explosion and to the paralysis of the entire process, not only from the Palestinian and Israeli standpoint but on the level of the entire region.

The problem is that Israel wants to reach an Arab-Israeli normalization and keep the Palestinian issue, which is very crucial and basic, suspended and revolving in circles. Hence the need for deep Arab and Palestinian evaluations.

I believe that the next meeting between President 'Arafat and Prime Minister Rabin, if it is held next Thursday and if it enters the same vicious circle then it will not reach any results.

[Salamah] In addition to the Palestinian and Arab regional evaluation process, you are demanding the United Nations, Washington, Moscow, and Oslo intervene in order to end the deadlocked Palestinian-Israeli negotiations. Are you still wagering on the effectiveness of the international role?

['Abd-Rabbuh] I believe that the U.S. position is not encouraging because it rehashes the Israeli arguments. However, there is an international responsibility that is not just confined to the U.S. position; there is the European position, which we heard yesterday in the meeting held with the troika delegation led by the French foreign minister. The European position is concerned about the political process and wants Europe to play a role despite the U.S. attempts to monopolize this issue.

There is also a role for the United Nations. There are regional and international blocs which want the peace process to achieve its objective. I believe this international situation is assuming a great responsibility. Exactly as this situation helped in signing the recent agreements, it is now assuming a great responsibility in that these agreements should not suffer the throes of death, as they say, and that horizons should be opened anew.

This issue will not be resolved by using the same level and methods currently employed in the Palestinian-Israeli dialogue or negotiations. I believe this road is closed because the Israeli policy does not want to activate the situation or honor or implement the agreements. The Israeli policy wants to take advantage of some aspects and isolate them from other aspects. It also wants to float the whole thing and remove the political basis; namely, the political solution, and focus on the security aspect, which is of interest to Israel, without taking into account the major aspect; namely, the political aspect, which will achieve the Palestinian rights.

[Salamah] The last question to Information Minister Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh is: Let us suppose that you will not be able to circumvent the real crisis in the current negotiations or, in your terms, override this vicious circle, will you possibly decide to halt the negotiating process with Israel?

['Abd-Rabbuh] The issue is not that of deciding to halt the negotiating process. In my opinion, even if meetings are held they will not yield anything. In other words, the negotiating process itself is not beneficial now due to the Israeli policy, even if meetings are held and even if there is talk about a limited breakthrough here and there. The problem is deeper than this. Hence, and stemming from our concern about the peace process and its success, we believe that there should be a regional and international role and participation in order to remove this process from the impasse.

[Salamah] Thank you, Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, for this statement.

['Abd-Rabbuh] Thank you.

'Arafat-Rabin Meeting Termed 'Utterly Disappointing'

TA1302092395 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM TIMES in English 10 Feb 95 p 4

[Editorial: "No Progress"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] As soon as President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin emerged from their summit meeting at the Erez checkpoint in Gaza yesterday morning, it was obvious that the result was utterly disappointing. No progress was made on any front.

'Arafat urgently needs Israel to lift the tightened closure on the occupied territories and release some of the 6,000 remaining Palestinian prisoners. Knowing Israeli sensitivity toward security issues, 'Arafat came to the meeting having just created new security courts to deal more efficiently with those suspected of activity in militant groups. 'Arafat's police in Gaza had also arrested over 100 activists from Nayif Hawatimah's DFLP, after that group claimed responsibility for killing an Israeli in the Gaza Strip.

Nevertheless, the Palestinian leader was met with the tired Israeli repetition that security is their primary concern, and that nothing can be done until security improves.

Rabin did, paradoxically, join 'Arafat in re-confirming adherence to the peace process. But Rabin and Israeli leaders must understand that by hardening their position, they severely undermine what is left of the process. Israeli leaders must see that we will never have true peace with continued occupation, land confiscations and the expansion of settlements.

Furthermore, Israeli officials need to realize a basic tenet of the process: peace will not last unless the present transitional period ends in the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

Those in Israel who believe the interim period can become a permanent status are deceiving themselves. They parrot the Likud position of limited autonomy as the permanent solution for the occupied territories, with the essence of sovereignty still under Israeli control.

The peace process is at a critical juncture. The recent, unprecedented Cairo summit rescued the situation, for a moment—yesterday's meeting undermined it yet again. Egyptian President Husni Mubarak cannot act the part of savior many more times.

The Palestinian people are highly disenchanted. Yesterday's setback will cause a further erosion in popular support for the Oslo Agreement.

No stone should be left unturned to redress the situation. The first step must be to lift the closure immediately—otherwise, all Rabin's soldiers and all Rabin's men, won't be able to put the peace process together again.

'Urayqat: Agreement Not 'Testing Ground' for Israelis

NC1202064695 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2200 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 11 Feb (MENA)—Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, minister of local government in the Palestinian Authority and head of the Palestinian delegation to the negotiations with Israel, said the Gaza-Jericho Agreement cannot stand on its feet without the implementation of the clauses of the transitional agreement with Israel, which has been delayed for eight months.

In an interview with AL-AHRAM to be published on 12 February, he said the agreement was not designed as a testing ground for the Israelis. He warned that any delay in implementing its clauses would deliver a fatal blow to the peace process. He added that the Israeli stance expressed in media statements appears very optimistic and positive but the Israelis lack the necessary seriousness at the negotiating table.

The Palestinian official said he believed Israel declares particular positions on peace in English and Arabic "but it seems the orders given in Hebrew are inconsistent with the overall peace process requirements," particularly the issues of settlement, the dithering over implementing the second part of the transitional agreement on redeployment and elections, the nonrelease of detainees, and the continuing policy of economic and political strangulation.

'Urayqat called for a united Palestinian and Arab stance that asserts to the Israeli Government that the terms of reference for peace are based on the inadmissibility of occupying the territories of others by force and on the implementation of the principle of land in return for peace.

Israel, Jordan Reportedly Deny Trucks Access to Jordan

JN1202111895 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1000 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli occupation troops have prevented Palestinian trucks carrying oranges to Jordan from crossing the Allenby Bridge this morning.

Truck drivers said that the Jordanian authorities prevented them from crossing the Damiya Bridge on 8 February on the pretext that there is a Jordanian-Israeli agreement preventing Palestinian trucks from crossing the Allenby and Damiya bridges.

Thousands Demonstrate Against Closure in Gaza

TA1302105595 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 13 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Several thousand Palestinians are demonstrating in central Gaza against the closure of the territories. Our correspondent reports that the demonstration is headed by the representatives of the Gaza Strip trade unions. The Palestinian police are preserving the calm.

Hamas Warns Clinton, Rabin Against Pressuring 'Arafat

JN1302142695 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1215 GMT 13 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, has warned U.S. President Bill Clinton and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin against pressuring Yasir 'Arafat into fomenting a civil war by carrying out violent operations against the Islamic resistance. Ibrahim Ghawshah [the official spokesman for Hamas] explained to our radio the reasons prompting him to issue this warning.

[Begin recording] [Ghawshah] What prompted us to issue this warning was the increasing pressures on the Palestinian Authority [PA], which is represented by 'Arafat, especially after the Erez meeting that was undermined by Rabin's extreme pressure. We were also prompted by Clinton's speech at the inauguration of yesterday's meeting in Washington and by Christopher's statements and others. This confirms that more than one side is pressuring 'Arafat into playing the last card; namely, the card of civil war. Therefore, we say that sparking off this war is possible by the PA, but nobody can predict the consequences of such an action.

[Correspondent] Mr. Ibrahim Ghawshah, you said developments point to the possible occurrence of some violent action against the Islamic movements in the self-rule areas before Thursday, that is, before the anticipated meeting between PA leader Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin. What makes you expect the occurrence of security operations against the Islamic forces in the self-rule area?

[Ghawshah] First of all, security operations against the Islamic movements are continuing. Since the PA's entry into the self-rule area, more than 500 strugglers and mujahidin, mostly from Hamas, have been arrested. Now there are strugglers and mujahidin from Hamas, the Islamic Jihad, and the Democratic Front in PA prisons. The PA has placed itself on one track; it is the track of responding favorably to Rabin and Clinton. Therefore, we strongly fear that the PA might take violent measures prior to 'Arafat's meeting with Rabin as a step along the path of satisfying Rabin. [end recording]

Hamas Says PA Limiting Operations; Gaza Fuel Supply Low

TA1202080195 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Abu-'Ala' [Ahmad Quray'], who holds the economics portfolio in the Palestinian Authority [PA], says the autonomy will begin importing petrol this week from Jordan and Egypt. Petrol supplies are low in the Gaza Strip because there have been no Israeli deliveries since last week's shooting attack near the al-Shaja'iyah junction on an Israeli fuel truck.

Also in Gaza, Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] leaders have accused the PA of trying to limit the movement's social and economic activities. According to a Hamas spokesman, the authority has acted against Hamas' charitable organizations and attempted to limit their sources of funding.

Hamas' al-Zahhar: Israel Seeking Palestinian Civil War

NC1002214195 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2014 GMT 10 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Gaza, 10 Feb (MENA)—Dr. Mahmud al-Zahhar, Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] spokesman in Gaza, has stated that Israel is seeking to trigger a civil war among the Palestinians.

He said: Our official position is clear and well-defined. We will not give Israel this opportunity and we will endure all kinds of suffering including arrest, imprisonment, trials, and even killing just as we endured in the past.

In an exclusive interview with MENA today, al-Zahhar said: We can respond to all parties, but we will not let Israel realize its goals. It is enough to say that Hamas has become Israel's ailment, for which it has failed to find a cure, just like Rabin said.

He continued: We have our political differences with the Palestinian Authority, but we are not its enemies. Accordingly, we will endure the measures it is taking, including arrests and trials of opposition figures, until conditions change.

Al-Zahhar described the current situation on the Palestinian negotiating track as gloomy. He remarked that this gloominess is expected.

He remarked: Our statements prior to the implementation of the self-rule agreement confirmed this situation for several reasons that have to do with the elements of the political process.

The Hamas spokesman explained these elements, pointing out that the first element is Palestinian and that it was represented by one faction that acted alone in the Oslo agreement without consulting the other factions. This weakened its position and the consequence of this weakness will be at the Palestinians' expense, he said.

He added that the second element was Israel, which does not want peace and wants security. Its plan to achieve this is based on having secure borders for itself and for the settlements, controlling all the gates leading in and out of the Gaza Strip, and striking at the Islamic movement at any price, even through the PLO, after its failure to do this and when its position before the world community became critical due to the intifadah, al-Zahhar said.

Dr. al-Zahhar continued that the third element is the international position as represented in the United States, whose goal, which is shared by donor states, centers on supporting Israel. Israel has taken all it wants at the expense of the Palestinians. Hence, we cannot rely on the international position, al-Zahhar remarked.

He added that the fourth element is the Arab position. Regrettably, Arab states were put in the worst situation ever after the Gulf war. They are rushing to catch up with Israel. If it were not for Egypt's recent stance—the meeting between President Mubarak, Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, and King Fahd Ibn-'Abd-al-'Aziz of Saudi Arabia—we would have seen the Arab regimes in a shameful state that would disgrace all of us everywhere.

Dr. al-Zahhar said that the elements of the game means giving Israel security and distracting the Palestinians. So far, 'Arafat had not fulfilled the task they expected him to undertake, which is striking down the Islamic movement.

West Seen 'Creating New Enemy' in Fundamentalism

MM1002161495 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 10 Feb 95 p 1

[Article by 'Abd-al-Bari 'Atwan: "Mother of Fundamentalism and Its Threats"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The NATO chief warned in more than one press interview last week of the threat of Islamic fundamentalism to the survival of Western civilization, to the point that he said that it has replaced communism as a major enemy of the West, hence all energies and capabilities should be mobilized to confront and uproot it.

U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry adopted the same position during his recent European tour.

These warnings are resulting from the southern European states' concern that Islamists might reach power in Arab Maghreb states, which are partners in the Mediterranean basin. Because that would lead to an influx of new boat refugees to European coasts, and to a repetition of the bloody conflict between Muslims and southern Europeans.

The prevailing idea in Europe at present says that states like Egypt, Algeria, and Morocco are facing a population explosion which the existing regimes, which assumed power after independence and most of which lack legitimacy, have failed to tackle, hence leading to the spread of poverty and corruption, which provide a fertile soil for the fundamentalist tide.

European states are adopting two theories to confront the fundamentalist tide. The first urges the need to improve economic conditions in North African states, to encourage investment there, and to give them the priority in any European planning. Spain and Portugal enthusiastically adopt this theory and are trying to impose it on the other European states. The Spanish Government is currently planning to host a conference in Barcelona next fall to crystallize this orientation.

As for the second theory, it leans toward a bloody confrontation with fundamentalism to uproot it by force, assigning this task to Arab states that are very experienced in this connection, especially Tunisia, Egypt, Morocco, and Algeria, in addition to Israel. This orientation is espoused by France and Italy.

This new and growing European orientation against fundamentalism coincides with the Israeli aims of diverting attention from the Hebrew state as a source of tension and instability in the region and finding a common enemy to unite both Israeli and Arab efforts to confront him. A delegation from an Israeli institute comprising five experts has visited London and other

European capitals to consolidate this idea and to warn the West about fundamentalism as the biggest threat to the world, its civilization, and stability. The delegation delivered lectures in political and strategic institutes and also held meetings with various leading public figures.

It is difficult for us to understand the insistence of the West—under U.S. leadership—on creating a new enemy after the defeat of the communist enemy, which cost them hundreds of billions of dollars over the past 70 years. Is it because they cannot live a normal life except in a world full of enemies, tension, and wars? Is it impossible for them to enjoy their life in a secure, peaceful world in which peoples coexist with one another and cooperate to achieve development and share prosperity?

Assuming they cannot live without enemies, their selection of Islamic fundamentalism as a replacement for communism is in fact a boost for it, provokes contempt for them, and is an insult to communism and all its military, economic, and human achievements...and definitely it had its achievements and failures as well.

Islamic fundamentalism, which has replaced communism in their schemes, has not got submarines, nuclear warheads, or satellites. Not does it manufacture tanks or produce aircraft. Its military materiel is no more than some rusty guns stolen from its local enemies, who are poorly armed, and a group of self-denying young men yearning to go to heaven.

What is puzzling us is that this fundamentalism was the West's strongest ally in its ferocious war against communist "atheism." Washington did not hesitate to supply the Afghan mujahidin with the latest and most advanced weapons and missiles. So how can such sincere and trustworthy allies turn into dangerous enemies in less than five years?!

The Afghanistan experience confirms that coexistence between fundamentalism and the West is possible, that is if the West wants it. But it does not. Because it sees the world as a whole from Israel's angle only: Anyone who is hostile toward Israel and obstructs its expansionist, settlement ambitions is hostile toward the West. Anyone who befriends it and accepts all its violations of international laws and human rights is a sincere friend for whom IMF coffers, world banks, and the Nobel prize should be opened.

We are advocates of cooperation, not confrontation. But the United States wants a ferocious war in order to tame the last Arab opposed to his rulers' process of normalization [with Israel], pilgrimage to the Knesset, and medical treatment in Hadasa hospitals along the lines of Eritrean President Isaias Afwerke and those behaving like him.

The U.S. tendency is to look for an enemy that is easy to defeat, like it did in Iraq. It is pouring oil on the fire of fundamentalism. It is pushing many people toward extremism at a time when moderation is a necessary demand in order to make the current peace process a success and eliminate the hottest spot of tension in the entire world.

The dangerous fundamentalism is the one in Washington, in particular in Congress. It is pushing U.S. decisionmaking into a one-way road, that is toward Israel, the only state in the world built on sectarian and racist foundations. As for the other fundamentalisms, they are weak, miserable, emotional, and not influential. They are a reaction to the tyranny and oppression of the "mother of fundamentalisms" in Israel and its continued humiliation of the Arabs, peaceful and rejectionist Arabs alike. The self-rule example in the Gaza Strip and what the Palestinian National Authority is experiencing daily is just one piece of evidence in this connection.

Algeria

New French Ambassador Holds Talks With Zeroual

LD1102134195 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] State President Liamine Zeroual this morning at the people's palace received the credentials of three ambassadors representing Egypt, France, and Brazil. Following the ceremony, the new Brazil's ambassador made the following statement:

[Begin Brazilian ambassador recording, in French with simultaneous Arabic translation] I have great honor to consolidate relations between Brazil and Algeria which have always been strong. I seize the opportunity to stress our readiness to strengthen our relations in the future. Our trade relations with Algeria are important. Brazil is one of the largest importers of Algerian hydrocarbons. In the future, we want to export our products to the Algerian market so that the trade exchange becomes balanced. The cooperation relations between our peoples are the result of friendly relations between the two countries, the relations which we consider with enthusiasm. [end recording]

For his part, the new Egyptian ambassador made the following statement:

[Begin Egyptian ambassador recording] It is a great honor to present His Excellency Liamine Zeroual my credentials as ambassador of Egypt to the Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria. The common ties bonding our brotherly countries are countless. [passage omitted]

The strong friendly relations existing between the two countries are cemented by a unified foreign policy on the Arab, African, and international level. [passage omitted] [end recording]

The following is the statement of the French ambassador:

[Begin French ambassador recording, in French with simultaneous Arabic translation] First of all, I would like to salute all Algerian men and women and express to them the French people's friendship, understanding, and solidarity, and I would also like to express our mutual concerns vis-a-vis the tests the Algerian people are experiencing. I had in depth talks with President Liamine Zeroual over all the issues that concern France and Algeria. I reaffirmed the continuation of France's policy and the will of our government to continue and develop the traditional economic and cultural cooperation relations with Algeria. Once again, I extended the condolences of the French government and people for the victims of the ugly attack which took place on 30 January, and I reiterated the condemnation of violence and terrorism. [end recording]

Opposition Leader on Rome Meeting, Mitterrand Proposal

NC1102125295 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0715 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 11 Feb (MENA)—Abdallah Djaballah, leader of the Algerian Renaissance Movement, has stressed that there is no plan at present to hold a third meeting among the Algerian opposition parties in Morocco next month. However, Shaykh Djaballah did not rule out the possibility of a meeting among Maghreb parties soon, though he did not specify the nature of the meeting or the parties that would take part in it.

On his party's stand regarding French President Francois Mitterrand's proposal of a European conference on Algeria, Shaykkh Djaballah told today's issue of AL-AHRAM that his party is in principle against the internationalization of the Algerian crisis and any Western intervention in it. But he added that if the purpose of the conference is to discuss aid to the Algerians after finding solutions to their crisis, his party would reexamine the conference. Djaballah added that although Mitterrand's proposal represents a new French position—acknowledging that the Algerian crisis is political and not a security or economic problem—the Algerians will continue to treat France and anything coming out of France with much caution.

Asked about his movement's position on presidential elections, Shaykh Djaballah told AL-AHRAM that presidential elections constitute one element of the solution but are not necessarily the solution. He noted that his party's position on this matter is expressed in the Rome statement signed by the Algerian parties. He pointed out that the Rome document had achieved what the previous rounds of dialogue between the government and the opposition parties, in which his party has participated, failed to achieve. One of the most important results was to obtain a commitment from all parties, including the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS], to respect democracy, respect the hand over of power, and condemn operations against civilians, institutions, and foreigners as well as against other principles whom the authority, despite its numerous endeavors, had failed to grab from the FIS, as he put it.

Egypt

Mubarak on Peace, Syria, 'Terrorism,' U.S.

NC1202072295 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2230 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 11 Feb (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak has warned that any delay in the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations will reflect negatively on the entire peace process, because the Palestine issue is the core of the problem.

In a statement to the London-based Arabic-language paper AL-HAYAH to be published on 12 February, President

Mubarak said that if it becomes difficult to achieve peace on the Palestinian-Israeli negotiating track, whether because of the Israelis or others, the Syrian track will lose confidence and will not feel reassured.

Drawing a comparison between the Alexandria summit and the Cairo summit, both held in the past few weeks, the president said peace was the link between the two summits. He said the Alexandria summit, in which King Fahd, the custodian of the two holy mosques, and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad participated, aimed at discussing the peace process in its entirety and ways to activate it on every track, including, of course, the Syrian-Israeli track. The summit was also meant to support the Arab League and its role and to discuss the prospects for clearing the Arab air, he said.

He stressed that the Alexandria summit had no secret or undeclared objectives.

On the four-way summit in Cairo, President Mubarak said it sought to salvage the peace process and get it moving after the obstruction of the Palestinian-Israeli talks following terrorist operations and other problems. We invited the two sides, the Palestinians and the Israelis, along with King Husayn to discuss, essentially, the peace issue, how to contain the problems surrounding it, and how to advance it on the Palestinian track, he said.

President Mubarak stressed that the two summits were basically aimed at saving the peace process.

The president emphasized that there is no change in the climate of Egyptian-Syrian relations. He said he sees nothing in the Cairo summit that should worry the Syrians.

The president explained that Egypt does nothing that is against the general Arab trend or against peace. When Egypt takes a step, he said, it is not necessary for everyone to agree with it; this does not mean we have differences.

President Mubarak said: We disagree with the United States on some things and are friends when it comes to other issues, but this does not spoil our cordial relations. We can disagree with Europe; we may disagree with any other friend.

He stressed that differences and different viewpoints among friends do not mean conflict. He said this happens within the framework of joint understanding and joint interests to achieve objectives.

Asked about Syrian reservations over the results of the Cairo four-way summit, President Mubarak said: We do not have details about what is going on between Israel and Syria. Egypt helps when it is asked to help. He added: I do not think President al-Asad would have attended the Cairo summit in the presence of Rabin. He said he cannot impose anything on anyone.

The president said he hoped progress would be made on the Syrian- Israeli negotiating track this year. He said a lack of confidence between the two sides is the main reason for the lack of progress on this track.

He said he believed Rabin could not be against peace. He explained that peace will be a major victory for Rabin.

On the conflict between Egypt and Israel over signing the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, President Mubarak expressed his hope that a solution would be found to this conflict and the Treaty signed.

He demanded: There should be equality between us and the Israelis. He said: If the Israelis declare they will sign after three or four years, then we will hold off from signing the Treaty for three or four years and sign together with them.

President Mubarak said Egypt will sign the day Israel signs the Treaty. We never objected before because there was a state of war between us and Israel, he said. Now that there is peace and we are being asked to sign the Treaty, which is up for renewal, I tell you that my neighbor must sign along with me. Mubarak added: Public opinion in Egypt cannot accept allowing Israel to own nuclear weapons while refusing to sign the Treaty at the same time. I have no such weapons and am being asked to sign. I cannot convince the public on this point. Public opinion carries weight and must be considered. The issue here is one of principle and we must reach agreement over it.

President Mubarak said that every Arab country is free to hold whatever opinion it wants regarding signing the Treaty. He pointed out that Egypt did not contact any Arab countries on this issue and added that every country behaves according to its international and domestic circumstances.

He added that Egypt has diplomatic relations and a peace agreement with Israel. Egypt cannot tell another country in the region not to normalize relations with Israel. He pointed out that every state has independent powers of decisionmaking and sovereignty.

President Mubarak discussed Arab reconciliation. He said: We were talking about Arab reconciliation when the Gulf war broke out and complicated things further.

He pointed out: Arab reconciliation needs time but there are hopes that the Arab atmosphere will be cleared and the road prepared toward reconciliation. But things need more time and effort. Mubarak said Egypt supports the people of Iraq and wants the suffering of the Iraqi people to be eased.

President Mubarak stated the need to find a solution to the conflict between Libya and the West over the Lockerbie issue, because, he said: It is not sensible for things to continue this way.

President Mubarak stated that there is no conflict with the United States over Libya. He noted that Libya is a neighboring country, which means there are many dimensions affecting Egyptian national security. But all that is required of us is not to violate the Security Council resolutions.

With regard to U.S. aid to Egypt, President Mubarak expressed his hopes that this aid will not stop. But he added that it might be reduced in a year or two.

President Mubarak said Egypt's request to join the Arab Maghreb Union has nothing to do with combating terrorism. It is based on trade relations and economic interests.

He said there is cooperation with the Arab countries in this regard. There is also bilateral coordination with some countries. He pointed out that Egypt can confront the criminals who mastermind terrorist operations.

He said democracy does not mean chaos: It means protecting the interests of the vast majority of the people. He pointed out that Egypt has complete freedom of the press and the legitimate and legal channels of expression are open to everyone within the framework of the law, in a way that does not shake the stability and security of society.

Answering a question, President Mubarak said: We do not have something called the Muslim Brotherhood. We only know that the Muslims are brothers. We do not have a society by this name. This is an illegal, dissolved grouping. We are taking legal measures against all those who violate the laws or Constitution, be they from the dissolved Muslim Brotherhood or otherwise, and even if they are from the ruling National Democratic Party.

President Mubarak also discussed internal issues of interest to the citizen and the homeland. He said that amending the Constitution is not his major occupation; he is occupied with raising the standard of living and improving education and services.

Al-Baz Views Nuclear Treaty, U.S. Pressure

NC1102123795 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1100 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 11 Feb (MENA)—Dr. Usamah al-Baz, first Foreign Ministry under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, has reiterated the need to free the Middle East of weapons of mass destruction. He particularly pointed out that Egypt is one of the first states to call for freeing the region of nuclear weapons.

Dr. al-Baz referred to the initiative by Egypt and Iran in 1974 to free the Middle East of nuclear weapons. He also referred to President Mubarak's 1990 call to free the region of all weapons of mass destruction, be they nuclear, chemical, or biological, and any similar type of weapon that may come into existence in the future.

In an interview with the weekly UKTUBAR to be published on Sunday [12 February], Dr. al-Baz calls on Israel to cooperate with Egypt in ridding the region of this type of weapon. He added: Israel must seriously contemplate compliance with the provisions of the [Nuclear Nonproliferation] Treaty [NPT]. It could have taken serious steps to show its intention to proceed in that direction, but with its present position, Israel expects the Arabs to comply with the NPT while it refuses to comply. This will upset the balance that is supposed to exist. This is something we cannot accept since it encroaches on our national security both in the near and distant future, he added.

Dr. al-Baz added: Israel must rid itself of two illusions: The first is that all types of inter-Arab rapprochement are against it, and the second is that it can prevent such rapprochement, which it cannot. He stressed that neither Israel nor anybody else can prevent Arab rapprochement, because it is an Egyptian policy that we care deeply about.

Asked about the concerns that Israel has voiced over the recent Alexandria summit, Dr. al-Baz said that among the Israeli illusions is that the Alexandria summit, in the opinion of some Israelis, was meant to counter Rabin's visit to Egypt. He asked: What would concern Syria or Saudi Arabia about Rabin's visit that would prompt them to hold a summit conference? He added: Will the world come to an end because of the visit? Rabin visited Egypt before that and will continue to visit Egypt, but it seems that the Israelis are getting paranoid [yata'atun al-hawajis]. Thus, fanatical tendencies have started to grip Israeli thinking. They talk in public about it and ask: When will President Mubarak visit Israel?

Dr. al-Baz stressed that the president will not be pressured by anyone into visiting Israel or any other country. He added that the president has no objections to visiting Israel once he sees that the visit will bring mutual benefits. Dr. al-Baz added that among the hysteria [preceding word in English] that has started to surface in Israel is the report prepared by the Israeli Foreign Ministry's Political Planning Department. The department, he added, wrote a memorandum that contained interpretations not shared by the other government agencies.

But all this, he added, is the result of the hysteria that has surfaced among certain circles, both at the individual level and in the press. He added: The memorandum mentions that Egypt is disputing Israeli policy. We cannot say that this reflects their policies. Since they have emphasized that it does not reflect their policies, we have to take them at their word. But we must emphasize to them that they have to refrain from conduct that leads to such talk.

Dr. al-Baz added: Israel's reply was that they could not prevent any official from expressing his own views on any matter, but they do not agree with what the report said. Dr. al-Baz added: We tell them that the fault is theirs for leaking this to the press. This leak will stir public opinion there, and if we come under pressure we will harden our position more and will never give in to such conduct. Dr. al-Baz added: Israel did not scare us in war and it cannot scare us in peacetime.

Turning to Egyptian-Israeli ties, Dr. al-Baz stressed that the United States is not putting pressure on Egypt. He added: Pressure normally means that there are hints, either explicit or implicit, that you will either be denied or granted specific privileges if you do or do not obey what they tell you, and so far this has not occurred.

Asked about reports published in Egypt that the United States had asked for military bases in this country, Dr. al-Baz stressed that this is not true, adding that the United States has never asked for military bases because it has long known our opinion in this regard very well.

On Egypt's relations with Iran, Dr. al-Baz said that in principle there are no contradictions or conflicts between the Egyptian and Iranian interests. He added: We believe that Iran could live in peace with the Arabs, because it is a neighboring and Muslim state with whom we have a long history of relations. However, two obstacles stand in the way: Iran is trying to pressure the neighboring Arab states or imposing some kind of a hegemony, domination, or threat. In addition, it is interfering in our affairs, even though we do not interfere in Iranian affairs.

Discusses Chances for Peace

MS1102095795 London FINANCIAL TIMES in English 11 Feb 95 p 3

[Report by David Gardner and Mark Nicholson, incorporating interview with Usama al-Baz, chief political adviser to Egyptian president Mubarak; date and place not given: "Coming Weeks 'Critical' for Mideast Peace"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo—Chances of securing an overall Middle East peace settlement depend on progress in the next few weeks on resolving the crisis in Israeli-Palestinian relations and reinvigorating negotiations between Israel and Syria, according to senior Egyptian officials.

Egypt, which hosted a summit 10 days ago with Israel, Jordan and the Palestine Liberation Organisation in an attempt to create momentum behind regional peace moves, wants the US to stage a Camp David-style negotiation between Syria and Israel to help break the impasse.

Dr Usama Al-Baz, President Hosni Mubarak's chief political adviser, warned in an interview with the Financial Times that "if progress is stalled on either the Palestinian or Syrian (peace negotiations) track, that does not mean we stay where we are. We could have a very serious regression, and be back to square one."

Egypt, now playing a pivotal role in trying to patch up the regional peace process after the January 22 suicide bomb attack by Islamic fundamentalists north of Tel Aviv which brought Israeli negotiations with the PLO on Palestinian self-rule to a standstill, reached its own peace treaty with Israel at US-sponsored talks in Camp David in 1979.

Mr Al-Baz said "these coming few weeks are crucial" if the peace process is not to disintegrate. He argued that the US was in a position to arbitrate between Syria and Israel, by synthesising Damascus' demand for a total withdrawal from the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights with Tel Aviv's requirement of an internationally underwritten peace treaty.

The Syrian and Palestinian peace processes have become intertwined in recent weeks. The bomb attack at Netanya was claimed by the Islamic Jihad organisation from the occupied territories, whose leadership is based in Damascus.

Similarly, the Hizbollah Islamist militia in south Lebanon has stepped up its attacks in recent weeks on the Israeli-occupied buffer zone in Lebanon, in some cases operating alongside PLO "rejectionist" groups based in Syria.

Israeli officials believe Syria is encouraging these offensives and bring Israel to the negotiating table on its own terms.

Mr Al-Baz said, "If Israel stalls on the Syrian (peace) track as well as the Palestinian one, that means it is negating the concept of a comprehensive settlement and is opting for selective, separate deals.

"Syria would be justified to move against peace" if Israel persists in these self-serving salami tactics, the senior Egyptian official said. "How can Syria then stop the rejectionist organisations among the Palestinians and Lebanese?"

Egyptian foreign ministry officials were dismayed at the lack of progress at Thursday's meeting between Mr Yitzhaq Rabin, Israeli premier, and Mr Yasir 'Arafat, PLO chairman and warned that Israel's continuing expansion of its settlements in the occupied West Bank was where "this whole process will break down".

Musa Notes 'Differences' With U.S.

NC1302084995 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0800 GMT 13 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Washington, 13 Feb (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa met with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher last night. The two officials focussed on Egyptian-American relations and held consultations on the future of the Middle East peace process and a number of other pending issues, including Egyptian-Israeli differences over the signing of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

Musa said after the meeting that relations between Egypt and the United States are good and developing. He added: However, this neither means nor requires that the policies of the two countries be identical and that the positions of each of them be a copy of those of the other.

Musa went on: There are points of differences in some positions, which is very natural. These differences should not affect Egyptian-U.S. relations, which must be good.

He said it is not in Egypt's interest to have bad relations with the United States. It is in Egypt's interest that these relations continue to be good and positive, despite the sometimes different positions of the two countries, he said.

U.S. Report Contains 'Untrue Information'

NC1002133795 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1240 GMT 10 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 10 Feb (MENA)—Ambassador 'Adil al-Safti, assistant foreign minister for international relations, has stated that the report issued recently by the U.S. State Department on human rights in Egypt includes untrue information. The report was prepared by junior employees and was not referred to officials who understand relations between Egypt and the United States, which supports the Egyptian stance, al-Safti said.

Commenting on the report today, Ambassador al-Safti said the report involves errors, including claims of the random killing of terrorists by security forces. The truth is that the security forces act in reaction to what terrorists do to civilians and they fire in return, he said.

He said the report mentioned incidents of torture in a vague way. He called on those who talk about torture to state the names of those affected by such acts. He said the Egyptian authorities are prepared to verify this information and investigate. If these acts really happened, the person responsible will be referred to trial and suitable compensation paid, he said, pointing out that the Egyptian Constitution stipulates that charges of torture are not dropped over time.

Ambassador 'Adil al-Safti said the State Department report failed to name the sources of its information, asserting that the department obtained the information from suspicious associations that have personal interests.

There are responsible sources the department can approach, primarily the Egyptian judiciary, which is famous for its fairness and honesty, he said. He said the government does not interfere in the work of the judiciary.

The assistant foreign minister for foreign relations pointed out that Egypt was one of the states that signed the Human Rights Declaration; it helped to phrase the document and joined it the moment it was signed. Egypt is a member of every international body concerned with human rights, he said.

He explained that Egypt's respect for human rights was demonstrated when it applied for membership of the UN Human Rights Committee and obtained the highest number of votes. Ambassador al-Safti repeated that Egypt respects human rights, both on the local and international levels.

Envoy Assails U.S. 'Islamic 'Terrorism' Label

NC1102111095 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0745 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Washington, 11 Feb (MENA)—Ambassador Ahmad Mahir, Egypt's Ambassador to the United States, has stressed that there is confusion and inconsistency in the some people's use of the term "Islamic terrorism" because Islam as a religion and creed is the antithesis of terrorism and its methods.

Speaking at a seminar held by George Washington University, he said that these people err when they use this term, which implies that Islam is the religion of terrorism when it is in fact a creed based on tolerance and understanding between humans. He added: The serious mistake that this claim implies becomes clear when we see that terrorist actions are not confined to the Islamic world, which some circles are unfairly trying to accuse of terrorism. Not all those who commit these actions are Muslims.

He noted that terrorism is merely an abnormal and destructive method resorted to by people with destructive tendencies, who use various forms of violence. They also use numerous slogans to attract the masses and to show themselves as the embodiment of a notion, principle, a certain creed, or a specific way of life.

Ambassador Mahir expressed his belief that democracy in itself is no guarantee against terrorism and does not provide full immunity from it, adding that democratic countries such as Germany, Japan, and even the United States itself have suffered from terrorism. He said: It is not enough to claim that terrorism in these countries is imported, because it has been proved that terrorism has in fact become a constant phenomenon of life in some of these modern countries.

But, he explained, even though democracy does not provide guaranteed immunity from terrorism, it undoubtedly helps to confront the internal obstacles and overcome the challenges and disappointments which terrorism exploits and uses to serve its purposes.

The Egyptian ambassador stressed that terrorism can never be defeated through police action alone. He said: It is not enough to arrest a person such as Ramzi Yusuf, who is accused of bombing the World Trade Center, and his extradition from Pakistan to New York to face justice. It is also not enough to arrest a number of terrorists and throw them into prison, though such measures are important. A greater need is to improve the people's lives, insure justice and freedom, give them a chance to express themselves, and provide them with the means to do this so that some of them will not resort to bombs or to killing others.

The ambassador warned that while terrorism must be confronted and fought, we must avoid falling into the trap of "counterterrorism". He also warned that there should be no discrimination when dealing with terrorism, because there is no such thing as terrorism being good or bad according to who committed this or that action.

Importance of Washington Meeting Noted

NC1102192595 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 11 Feb 95

[Commentary by Ahmad al-Qasir: "Washington's ministerial meeting is the last chance to save the peace process from collapse"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Political observers worldwide will focus their attention tomorrow on the U.S. capital Washington, where a meeting of the foreign ministers of Egypt, Jordan, Israel, and the Palestinian National Authority will take place with the participation of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher. The meeting will be held in implementation of resolutions passed by the recent four-way summit in Cairo called by President Husni Mubarak.

In our assessment, the Washington meeting is the last chance to save the Middle East peace process from complete collapse after the current peace efforts reached a deadlock on all Arab-Israeli tracks, especially on the Palestinian-Israeli one, which is regarded the cornerstone of the entire peace process. The reason is Israel's intransigence and attempt to stifle the Palestinian people and starve them to death through a continuous blockade, isolating them from the outside world, and blocking their means of livelihood in the name of protecting Israel's security and citizens, especially after the Netanya suicide incident.

Therefore, if the foreign ministers fail to find a way to break this deadlock, activate the peace process, and overcome the obstacles blocking the negotiations, the consequences will be grave for everyone. This is what the U.S. Administration wants to avoid now to preserve its credibility in its capacity as sponsor of the peace process from the beginning and to maintain its economic interests in the Arab region. It has become apparent to everyone that there are certain powers seeking to wreck the peace process at its roots so that the status of tension, violence, and counter violence will keep dominating this sensitive region.

This region's security and stability is directly linked with the security and peace of Europe and the whole world. This region will not be quiet except under a just and comprehensive peace that guarantees the legitimate rights of all the region's nations, including the peoples of Palestine and Israel.

Realizing the potential danger of what will happen if the peace efforts break down, proceeding from its pan-Arab historic responsibility toward its Arab nation and its fateful causes, and in line with its firm, declared policy on the commitment to the strategy of peace and the adoption of negotiations as means of solving world problems and disputes, Egypt hastened from the beginning, through President Mubarak's efforts, to remove all difficulties that blocked the peace process on all tracks.

Egypt also helped all parties to meet at the negotiating table which was the object of appreciation from all the world's countries. The latest of these efforts was the extraordinary quadripartite summit that was attended by King Husayn, Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin.

The extraordinary four-way summit sought to hold a frank and open dialogue to resolve the outstanding problems and restore confidence between the Palestinians and Israel. This confidence was shaken greatly because of the mutual acts of violence, the hideous implementation of the Jewish settlement policy, the attempt to Judaize Jerusalem, and the attempt to embarrass the Palestinian National Authority and portray it as an impotent authority before the Palestinian people.

Here is Egypt participating in the Washington meeting with a great hope that Israel will review its calculations, especially after the reemerging crisis in the situation. This was apparent in the failure of the recent Palestinian-Israeli talks in Cairo, the end of the recent 'Arafat-Rabin meeting without any positive outcome, and the failure of the European troika delegation to achieve any progress in its current tour of the region's countries.

The ball is now in the court of Israel and the United States and the Arabs have nothing left to offer after all that they gave for the sake of a just and comprehensive peace. Besides, the element of time is not in Israel's favor as they imagine.

These frantic media campaigns against Egypt will not succeed in forcing it to change its political principles, whether on the peace process or the nuclear armament in the region. The method of force will not work in imposing a fait accompli situation on the Arabs.

After all this, what is Israel waiting for before providing security and peace for its people after such long suffering?

Musa: Talks Failure Threatens Security

NC1202090695 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0840 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 12 Feb (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has warned that the failure of the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations will have dire consequences threatening the security of the Middle East.

In a statement to the BBC broadcast this morning, Musa said Israel's full implementation of its agreement with the Palestinians will create a better climate for the peace negotiations.

The foreign minister blamed Israel for the lack of progress in the negotiations. He pointed out that Israel is in control of the territory it is occupying, has the upper hand there, and signed an agreement providing for specific withdrawal from residential areas ahead of Palestinian elections.

Israel's reluctance in implementing this, he said, heightens the sense of frustration, which in turn leads to violence.

Musa stressed the need to remove this feeling one way or another.

Israel Blamed for Failed 'Arafat-Rabin Meeting

NC1002144595 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 10 Feb 95

[Commentary by Zayn al-Ja'fari: "Peace process enters stalemate for second time"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Again a deadlock threatens the Middle East peace process, with the failure of a meeting yesterday at the Erez crossing between Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin. The failure of the meeting was the result of Israel's exaggerated obsession with security fears. The obsession that hindered the achievement of positive results on the other issues concerned the security blockade Israel is imposing on the West Bank and Gaza following the Netanya operation, as well as the issues of the redeployment of the Israeli troops, the halt to settlement activity, the release of detainees, and providing a favorable climate for the Palestinian elections.

Following a two-hour meeting, 'Arafat and Rabin found nothing new to tell the press. Accordingly, they called off the joint news conference slated to follow the meeting. What inspires some hope is the agreement between 'Arafat and Rabin to meet again next week, although the outcome of that meeting will be uncertain under the Israeli stance that threatens the regional peace process. It is essential for all the parties concerned to rescue the peace process from the deadlock.

Remarkably enough, the 'Arafat-Rabin meeting was preceded by the four-way summit meeting Mubarak called in Cairo on 2 February. In addition to Mubarak, the meeting was attended by 'Arafat, Rabin, and King Husayn of Jordan. Discussions lasting over five hours were characterized by complete frankness. The four-way summit was viewed as a positive step the Egyptian political leadership undertook to rescue the peace process.

We should note here that in the context of the four-way summit, the Israelis and Palestinians were very forthright when it came to discussing the causes of violence and the recent incidents that marred the peace climate. The summit succeeded in giving a push toward a solution to many outstanding issues between Israel and the Palestinians. The two sides agreed that 'Arafat and Rabin would hold meetings to keep up efforts to resolve these issues. The first such meeting was that held yesterday, which failed due to Israeli intransigence.

What really astonishes us is the Israeli demand that the Palestinian side fight terrorism as a precondition for making progress in the peace process, at a time when Rabin refuses to lift the security blockade on the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Palestinian Authority reportedly launched a broad campaign of arrests in Gaza the day before yesterday against members of Jihad and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine in an attempt to contribute to the success of the summit meeting between 'Arafat and Rabin. To reciprocate, Israel is urged to curb the movement of settlers and refrain from encouraging them through the decisions the Israeli Government adopted recently to expand settlements. Rabin's government should be firmer in implementing the agreements it committed itself to with the Palestinians, the agreements that took on an international character.

It is also urged to make efforts to boost the peace process regardless of the narrow electoral considerations that justify the Rabin government's hesitation in helping progress along all the tracks of the peace process. What should be pointed out here is the need for the Rabin government to realize that there are extremist Jews who are primarily interested in making the peace process fail.

Amid these developments we can say that the responsibility for rescuing the peace process is not exclusive to the Palestinians and Israelis alone; Arab and international parties have an extremely important role to play in eliminating the obstacles hindering progress in the peace process, particularly along the Palestinian track, which is the cornerstone in the comprehensive peace process.

Israeli Gains, Arab Losses After Cairo Viewed

NC1002211895 Cairo AL-'ARABI in Arabic 6 Feb 95 p 3

[Report based on dispatches by 'Imad al-Din Husayn and Ahmad Murad from Cairo, Shawqi Abu-Sha'irah from Damascus, and Muhammad Dalbah from Washington]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Under the slogan "saving the peace process from collapse," Cairo has witnessed one of the most serious acts of "official scurrying" toward Israel. For the first time in the region's modern history, Israel participated in a summit that brought together in addition to the Israeli prime minister, three Arab leaders whose countries have signed peace agreements with Israel. Peres caught the significance of the meeting when he urged that this summit be turned into a "constituent assembly or "coalition of peace" versus the enemies of peace and the terrorist groups and perhaps against everyone who "dares to speak" and criticize the Israeli peace project.

Cairo's quadripartite summit ended as it had begun: enigmatic and unexpected both in timing and results. Based on news leaks and the "Israeli sense of victory," it is certain that Israel gained most from the meeting and succeeded in eliminating the "fragile" and minimal amount of Arab solidarity that was achieved during Alexandria's tripartite summit about one month ago.

The summit began and ended but no one knew its real sponsor and backer. Cairo says that it was Mubarak who issued the invitations a week in advance and gave the go signal. More logically, U.S. pressures were exercised and intensive U.S. demands were made to Egypt throughout last week, and it was these pressures and demands that decided that the summit would be held to halt the growing Egyptian-Israeli disagreement over the nuclear issue. In the U.S. view this disagreement is capable of undermining the settlement and harming U.S. interests, and naturally Israeli interests as well, throughout the region.

The timing was a surprise because of the following. After the Alexandria summit came Rabin's war threat and the [Israeli Foreign Ministry's] position paper advocating punishments for Egypt. In the midst of the Egyptian official and popular alert reactions to these threats, all the signs pointed to a different scenario, notably perhaps a halt in the eager Arab scurrying toward Israel.

Then came the bombshell! The quadripartite summit was like a "cold shower" that doused the fire of the growing Arab sentiment against Israeli ambitions. This was the first Israeli gain from the summit. It is certain that Egypt's official media will halt their sharp tone against Tel Aviv. Perhaps they have already done so. Instead of talking about "Israeli papers and documents that have been thrown in the wastebasket," a new tone has surfaced focusing on ways of saving the peace settlement from collapse and not squandering the achievements already made.

Although the final communique issued by the Cairo summit is the last thing one would rely on to learn the truth about what took place inside the meetings, its most prominent quality is that its "wording was entirely Israeli." We say this, although all media have reported that Dr. Usamah al-Baz had some disagreements with several officials from the other three countries over the wording. The communique made no references whatsoever to the Israeli settlements in the occupied territories or the closure of the West Bank and Gaza that effectively turned them into one large jail.

It is noteworthy that this contradictory communique noted with appreciation President Mubarak's initiative to turn the region into a zone free from nuclear weapons. Still Shim'on Peres' first remarks after the summit ended stated that Israel still refused to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. It was as if Mubarak's initiative referred to Chile or Mozambique rather than Israel's nuclear arsenal that hangs like a sword over Egypt, other Arab and Islamic countries, and everyone that Israel believes rightly or wrongly will threaten it one of these days. More seriously, Peres said that "the Egyptian-Israeli crisis" had been resolved, which would suggest an Egyptian retraction. However, 'Amr Musa denied this!

Another gain made by Israel from the summit pertained to Yitzhaq Rabin and the Israeli Labor Party. Whether innocently or by prior planning, the quadripartite meeting looked like an Arab election rally to back Rabin and the Israeli Labor Party in Israel's next elections, particularly as Israeli polls show that Rabin's popularity has been sharply reduced while the popularity of his Likud opponent has been rising noticeably.

Tel Aviv's basic gain is represented in the fact that it imposed its agenda on the conferees. According to the Israeli officials' statements, the four conferees, with support and encouragement from the United States, switched to the camp of peace and moderation against that of the terrorist fundamentalists. The summit thus seems a spiritless counteraction to the heroic operation the Islamic Jihad carried out in Netanya two weeks ago, the operation that killed 21 Israelis, mostly military, and shook Israel with the force of one fedayeen operation.

As pointed out in the final statement, the four parties' major concern is to fight "terrorism," which refers here to the struggling resistance of Hamas and Jihad in the occupied territories, the national resistance and Hizballah in south Lebanon, and anyone who says "no" to the settlement process.

The danger of this logic is that it makes Israel lead all Arab regimes in the so-called terrorism issue and trivialize the real issue, which is the Israeli occupation of Arab territory.

The most important thing this summit revealed is the real weakness Israel feels despite all its military power, its propaganda machine, and the support it gets from America. Shim'on Peres, who tried to play the role of the wise preacher who chooses his words and expressions carefully, has turned into a childish teenager politician as he has tried to portray the Cairo summit as a reply to those who imagined that they could isolate Israel and that it represented a bloc of the defenders of peace and the founders of a new alliance.

Going too far in his fantasies, he announced that there was an open invitation to all, in a clear reference to Syria. This unjustified and illogical Israeli joy clearly reveals the panic that has gotten hold of both Tel Aviv and Washington just because three Arab leaders met in Alexandria to talk about the least degree of Arab solidarity. Some Israelis, like Yosi Beilin, went as far as to say that the Cairo summit was a practical and rapid response to the Alexandria summit. Usamah al-Baz replied that it was inconceivable to set up an alliance or bloc and that even if such a bloc was formed, it would not be with Israel against Arabs.

Measured by gains and losses, the summit helped King Husayn regain his full role as a basic player in the settlement process. He brushed himself clear of the dust of the Gulf war, having put all his cards in the American and Israeli basket and after restoring full relations with Egypt and improving his relations with Yasir 'Arafat to prepare himself for the guarantor's role in any final settlement concerning Palestinians in the future. It seems that the Jordanian role is being saved for the days to come. This might explain the ambiguity surrounding that role. The king has wagered indefinitely on the Israeli horse. This does not prevent his foreign minister from talking about Arab rights and Israel's intransigence in an attempt to win the favor of the Jordanian public, who are mostly against an agreement with the Israelis, of Syria, and of some Arab states who have reservations on his leasing Arab territory to Israel.

The real loss in the Cairo summit was borne by the Palestinians, just as they endured the consequences of Arab weakness vis-a-vis the Israeli arrogance. They emerged from the summit to find that the results that concern them are related to procedural meetings on elections to begin in Cairo today, another meeting between 'Arafat and Rabin at Erez crossing on Thursday, to be followed by a meeting between the four foreign ministers and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in Washington on Sunday. All these meetings happened before and will not produce actual results so long as Israel continues to impose its security pressure as an approach to any real settlement, forcing conditions and terms for peace in the Israeli style.

In contrast to the Palestinian loss in its own track with Tel Aviv, according to reliable information AL-'ARABI obtained from Palestinian sources, the Cairo summit can be viewed as a rudimental change in the Palestinian-Israeli settlement march, which produced nothing but a stumbling agreement in Oslo that is being threatened with collapse in the wake of any fedayeen operation. This is in spite of the fact that these sources play down Israel's claims that the summit charted a new map to settle the Palestinian issue. This map responds to a new Israeli vision of this settlement that jumps readily to the final phase that will seemingly be crowned with the proclamation of a Jordanian-Israeli- Palestinian confederation in the West Bank and Gaza.

These sources link this vision to the recent meeting in Amman between 'Arafat and King Husayn and Rabin's announcement of his plan to separate the Palestinians and Israelis in the Palestinian lands occupied in 1967. The sources maintain that Yasir 'Arafat has capitulated to the new Israeli vision, having felt the seriousness of the recent Israeli threats to suspend negotiations on implementing the second phase of the Oslo agreement.

The sources say that Rabin experienced a difficult choice in the past few days between a number of alternatives to restore the popularity of his government at a very critical stage. This is considering that the time separating this government from the next Knesset elections is very short and getting shorter, particularly since the electoral battle started very early this time. The difficulty facing Rabin was choosing between two things. The first was to suspend the Oslo agreement and negotiations with 'Arafat, admit the failure of one of the major steps he promised the Israelis would bring them security; and, accordingly, surrender to the Israeli rightists an important electoral card that might contribute to preventing his party from returning to power in 1996. The second choice was to achieve a rapid political stride that annuls the Oslo agreement and sets out toward negotiations, which the Israelis call "permanent solution negotiations, with 'Arafat in coordination with Jordan, so that this permanent solution could be achieved before the date of the Israeli elections in the summer of 1996.

This last vision was not the result of the Netanya suicidal operation. All that operation did was the swift submission of that vision to a heated discussion before the argument around it within the Labor Party and the Israeli government is settled. After all, its implementation would require additional time to enable Rabin to implement his "separation" plan in the West Bank and thus settle the final status of Jewish settlements there, conclude the greater Jerusalem plan, and expand the so-called green line several kilometers to the east before arriving at the negotiating table and putting these final settlements in new agreements with 'Arafat and King Husayn.

Rabin strives to annex part of the West Bank to his nation and turn the Palestinian presence in the West bank into isolated self-ruled residential islands jointly supervised by the Palestinians and Jordanians. This joint supervision covers nothing more than the administrative affairs of the population, leaving Israel as the sole party concerned with sovereignty on the land and waters of the West Bank.

The separation plan, hurriedly devised by the Israeli security authorities, provides for expanding and connecting a number of Israeli settlements so that they can form geographical-human barriers between Palestinian communities in Ramallah, Nabulus, Janin, and Hebron. The plan also provides for building a large network of subsidiary roads connecting these settlements and for the completion of Sharon's project, known as the "Seven Stars," whose aim is to move the 1949 armistice lines several kilometers eastward.

The plan also includes the completion of the greater Jerusalem project, which covers 20 percent of the West Bank area. This new map will be completed with Rabin's announcement that the River Jordan line will constitute the eastern security border for his state.

The new Israeli separation plan includes a series of supplementary measures to cordon off and watch the Palestinians in the West Bank. This is to be implemented by deploying police dogs and about 2,000 soldiers of the Israeli border guards along the imaginary borders that lie east of Jerusalem and surround the settlements north and south of the West Bank. Watch towers will be built and electronic monitoring equipment and laser telescopes will be used.

The plan also calls for building an electrified electronic fence near Qalqilyah and Tulkarm costing 800 million Israeli shekels because watch in these areas seems to be more difficult than in other areas for their close proximity with the Jewish settlements.

The plan calls for a gradual ban on the Palestinian laborers working in the 1948-occupied Palestinian territories and replacing them with 20,000 workers from Eastern Europe and the Far East. It also calls for issuing special registration plates for the Palestinian cars that will be allowed to operate in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and for establishing corridors for the travel of Israeli and Jordanian tourists not close to the Palestinian population centers.

Finally we come to the Syrian stance, which has been on the mind of everyone, including the Israelis. Syria's specter lingered over the summit and dominated its final communique. Israel's maneuvers and statements, which tried to portray the event as being directed against Damascus, did not succeed. Nor did Rabin's exaggerated warning, in concurrence with 'Arafat, of the danger of the Palestinian factions stationed in the Syrian capital.

During the meeting, Mubarak himself asked for the file of Islamic Jihad Movement leader Fathi al-Shiqaqi, a gesture signaling Egypt's sympathy.

This Israeli rashness was met with a firm, violent Syrian response that the Palestinian factions stationed in Syria are legitimate and defend their usurped territories.

Al-Shiqaqi himself also affirmed that Israel will be very sorry if it moves to another place and that all his movement's operations and weapons are inside the occupied territories.

Perhaps the Egyptian stance, which rose to a high level of coordination with the Syrians, helped to restrain Rabin and Peres when 'Amr Musa said at the end of the summit that Egypt fully supports the Syrian stance. Musa announced this stance despite Damascus' lukewarm reaction to the Cairo summit and Syrian Information Minister Muhammad Salman's statements that the summit's real aim was to salvage the Oslo Accord from its deadlock.

The U.S. Administration's failure to find any reason to condemn Syria demonstrates its firm position against the persistent Israeli attempts to isolate it and make it accept Tel Aviv's settlement scenario, a scenario about which Egypt has expressed reservations. Washington was forced to announce recently that it still believes that Damascus wants peace.

However, a practical proof of Israel's Syria obsession is the weeks-old fierce controversy inside the United States about the proposal to send U.S. forces to act as a buffer between the Syrians and the Israelis on the Golan Heights in case the two sides reach a political settlement. The controversy was still continuing when the Cairo summit was held. Israel is fuelling this controversy to serve its aims and is mobilizing its supporters and pressure groups for the purpose.

Recently several Clinton administration officials exploited a meeting they held in December 1994 with 100 Arab and Jewish American figures to criticize those who oppose sending U.S. forces to the Golan Heights as part of security arrangements following an Israeli withdrawal from the area. The U.S. officials described the opponents' campaign as a "hysterical campaign of distortion." That meeting was the fifth in a series of meetings that U.S. officials held with Arab and Jewish American leaders since the limited self-rule agreement was signed between the PLO leadership and Israel in September 1993. [passage omitted]

The position of the opponents of the deployment of U.S. forces on the Golan was strengthened by the results of a U.S. public opinion poll conducted by the Lenters Research Institute [name of polling institute as published] on 2 and 3 February. This is the same institute that assisted new Speaker of the House of Representatives Newt Gingrich to market his program "Contract with America." Some 58 percent of the respondents said they oppose deploying U.S. troops on the Golan. Only 11 percent approved, half of whom said that their approval hinges on whether the U.S. soldiers would be subjected to "terrorist" attacks.

Lebanon's share from the Cairo summit revealed what Israel really wants from a political settlement. Minutes before Rabin arrived in Cairo, he sent a warning to the Lebanese Government because the latter had announced the arrest of an Israeli spy ring in Beirut whose mission had been to undermine the domestic Lebanese situation. In his warning, Rabin told Lebanon to choose between a crushing military offensive or permitting Israeli agents to move freely between Beirut and the occupied border strip in south Lebanon. This is the essence of the Israeli peace.

AL-'ARABI has learned that Damascus refuses to allow U.S. forces to monopolize the peacekeeping role on the Golan Heights and wishes the mission to be entrusted to multinational forces when the time comes to draw up security arrangements in the area. A senior Syrian source told AL-'ARABI that Israel has not yet endorsed the principle of full withdrawal. He added that no security arrangements will be discussed until this principle is accepted.

Nasirite Party Berates Cairo 4-Way Summit

NC1002202395 Cairo AL-'ARABI in Arabic 6 Feb 95 p 4

[Statement by the Nasirite Arab Democratic Party; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] Some people have voiced optimism over Alexandria's three-way summit. They have even said that it is an indication that the ruling authority in Egypt has finally realized the seriousness of its role that enabled Israel to extend its hegemony and augment its usurpation of the Arab rights.

The summit gave the impression that the Egyptian regime is about to rectify its courses and continue its endeavors to achieve Arab reconciliation and rally Arab ranks vis-a-vis the Zionist domination, which has gone so far as to hint of the possibility of imposing sanctions on Egypt, proceeding with nuclear armament, and threatening to launch an all-out war against the Arabs.

No sooner had the Arab summit ended than the ruling regime made shocking news a few days after this summit by calling for convening another summit which, for the first time, brought together three Arab leaders and the Israeli enemy leader. The framework and atmosphere of this summit are completely contradictory to the concepts of the three-way Alexandria summit.

The meeting, which was called the quadripartite summit and was recently held in Cairo under the sharp edge of the Israeli hegemony, its vile and oppressive acts of aggression on all Arab fronts, and its blatant challenge of the Arab dignity and feelings, came to register the following clear-cut, irrefutable facts:

1. The Arab regimes, which pursued the policy of relinquishing Arab rights and were involved in the march of capitulation, beginning with Camp David and currently the Gaza-Jericho Accord and the Jordanian-Israeli Accord, are no longer capable of shouldering their national and pan-Arab responsibility and are not qualified to represent the Arab people. These regimes plundered the pan-Arab interests to the point of no return.

Going from one extreme to the other—namely, from the three-way Alexandria summit to the quadripartite Cairo summit, was a crucial test in defining and determining the frail nature of these regimes and their full readiness to immediately capitulate when pressures are brought to bear on them.

2. It is Israel that dictates its will and policy on these regimes. It is also Israel that forces them to succumb to its covetous designs.

The three Arab leaders met with an adamant enemy, who intimidated them and refused to recognize any Arab right, but rather rejected all Arab rights in public. This enemy refuses to withdraw and halt the building of settlements. It also refuses to redeploy the Israeli forces and sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. The Israeli enemy refuses to release Palestinian detainees and to lift the siege imposed on the West Bank. This enemy seeks to seize more wealth such as Arab waters, including a share of the River Nile and revenues of Arab oil and gas.

3. Convening a quadripartite summit immediately after the tripartite summit, with completely different content and form, reiterates that U.S. fingers were behind the sudden change in stances. This also demonstrates that it is the United States that dominates the region's Arab regimes by a remote control, using the stick and carrot policy. This U.S. interference is no longer confined to the broadlines and general policies, but it is affecting all political, economic, and security domains.

4. The ruling regime in Egypt is extremely confused and frustrated. It is no longer capable of adopting principled stances and of delineating its policies. This regime's stances and ideology are defined under pressure. It has lost control of its political decision.

5. The meeting, which was held under the name the quadripartite summit, did not only aim at aborting the idea of reviving Arab solidarity, but also at establishing the infrastructure and the financial and organizational institutions of the Middle East market, which would ensure for Israel a dominant economic and strategic status in the region. It would also ensure U.S. hegemony in the region.

6. This retreat and about-face, which were characterized with haste and fear, demonstrate the readiness of the Arab regimes, which took part in the meeting, to succumb to the U.S. orders and to appease Israel at the expense of the national and pan-Arab interests. They also mean that these regimes have relinquished solidarity with Syria, leaving it alone in confronting the U.S.- Zionist alliance.

The so-called quadripartite meeting failed to respond to any Arab legitimate rights and demands. This meeting left all these rights captive of negotiations fully dominated by the United States and Israel. The only clear thing achieved during this humiliating meeting was an agreement to ensure Israel's security in confronting the Palestinian resistance, which is listed, even by the Arabs, under the name of terrorism.

Our party, which strongly condemns this meeting, which is against the pan-Arab aspirations and demands, believes that the quadripartite summit is so far the most dangerous link in the chain of plots aimed at containing the Arab homeland, making it disintegrate, and controlling it by the U.S.-Zionist alliance.

Parliament Passes Law on Control of Unions

NC1202221795 Paris AFP in English 2150 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, Feb 12 (AFP)—The Egyptian parliament Sunday [12 February] passed a law giving the government new powers over union elections amid bitter opposition from unions controlled by the fundamentalist Moslem Brotherhood.

The law, amending legislation adopted in 1993, calls for the establishment of a legal committee to supervise union elections, which could refer to state institutions for help.

Unions representing doctors, pharmacists, engineers and scientists immediately threatened a general strike, union officials said.

Before the vote the unions had mandated their leaders to set a date for a warning strike ahead of a general strike, the officials added.

The law still has to be signed by President Husni Mubarak before taking effect.

'Abd-al-Mun'im Abu-al-Futuh said he hoped Mubarak would send the measure back to parliament, which had "carried out an anti-constitutional act."

Abu-al-Futuh, deputy secretary-general of the Arab Doctors' Union, told AFP that "according to the constitution, any law concerning a union has to originate from the general assembly" of the union itself.

Union general assemblies earlier called for a peaceful protest march to the presidential palace Monday.

The 21 professional unions have close ties to the outlawed but previously tolerated Moslem Brotherhood, which has been subjected to an increasing clampdown by the authorities waging a battle against Moslem militants.

The 21 are mainly controlled by the Islamists, while the workers' unions are state-controlled.

The Islamists say the amendment adopted Sunday could open the way to "government interference on the pretext of having been asked to support the legal committee."

Two thousand trade unionists demonstrated in front of parliament here Saturday to protest the bill.

The authorities have accused members of the Moslem Brotherhood of funding armed Islamic militants in their campaign, which has claimed about 650 lives since it began in March 1992.

Unions Threaten Strike

NC1202183195 Paris AFP in English 1807 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, Feb 12 (AFP)—The Egyptian doctors' and pharmacists' unions, both controlled by the fundamentalist Moslem Brotherhood, threatened Sunday [12 February] to call a strike if parliament adopted a law giving the government new powers over union elections.

The two unions "decided to step up the struggle and call on their members to prepare for a general strike, except for those in emergency services," the organisations said in a statement obtained by AFP.

"We reject this bill and demand that the government withdraw it."

The statement called on all professional unions to hold a peaceful protest march to the presidential palace Monday.

The 21 professional unions have close ties to the outlawed but previously tolerated Moslem Brotherhood, which has been subjected to an increasing clampdown by the authorities waging a battle against Moslem militants.

The 21 are mainly controlled by the Islamists, while the workers' unions are state-controlled.

Islamists reject the bill's call for the establishment of a legal committee to supervise union elections, which could refer to state institutions for help.

The statement said the bill could open the way to "government interference on the pretext of having been asked to support the legal committee."

Two thousand trade unionists demonstrated in front of parliament here Saturday to protest the bill.

The authorities have accused members of the Moslem Brotherhood of funding armed Islamic militants in their campaign, which has claimed about 650 lives since it began in March 1992.

Security Source Details 9 Feb Actions

NC1002195695 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1843 GMT 10 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 10 Feb (MENA)—An official security source reported today that three of the four terrorists who were killed in two separate clashes with the police in al-Minya, Upper Egypt, yesterday were involved in an attack on the al-'Idwah Police Station last Sunday. The source named the attackers involved in that incident as Fayiz Ramadan Ahmad, 'Uqlah al-Sayyid Jawdah, and Ramadan Khamis.

The source said that according to information received by the security forces, these individuals, using the alias Majdi Muhammad 'Abdallah, bought a house in al-Shaykh Mas'ud village in al-'Idwah District from the citizen 'Abd-al-Fattah Salim for 3,000 Egyptian pounds. The information showed that one of them had approached the owner and acted as intermediary between him and the other terrorists.

The security source added that the terrorist group, whose members told the villagers that they were employees of a land reclamation company, had planned to use this house as a base of operations. After the security forces ascertained that the terrorists were present in the house, counterterrorism units and Central Security Forces and police units surrounded the place.

The source said that the terrorists were ordered to surrender but instead of complying they opened fire and hurled bombs on the security forces who returned the fire, killing three terrorists. Two terrorists escaped.

The source said that when the security forces searched the hideout, they found a 9-mm Beretta pistol, two locally manufactured pistols, four explosive devices, 53 bullets for automatic rifles, 109 electric circuit frames, a timer, a bag of nails, and some ball bearings.

The source added that at the time this operation was underway, information reached state security agencies that another group of fugitive terrorists was hiding inside sugar beet plantations in 'Izbat Hiller in al-Minya's Abu Qurqas District. The security forces surrounded the plantation to arrest the fugitives but were confronted with a hail of gunfire. They returned the fire.

The source said that when a search was carried out afterwards, the body of one of the fugitives was found among the crops. A locally manufactured pistol and four bullets were found near the body. Efforts are being made to identify the body using the fingerprint method.

In their efforts to thwart terrorist crimes against police personnel and citizens, the security forces are currently tracking the paths among the sugar beet plantations that fugitives wanted by the police use during their escape.

4 'Terrorists' Killed in Maghagha District

NC1102125595 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1230 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Al-Minya, 11 Feb (MENA)—State Security units succeeded this morning in eliminating four fugitive terrorists who were wanted in connection with numerous recent terrorist attacks.

The security forces had received information that several fugitive terrorists who were planning "to carry out acts of sabotage and murder" were staying at a hideout in al-Minya's Maghagha District in Upper Egypt. When they surrounded the place, the terrorists opened fire, triggering a clash between the two sides during which Hajjaj Disuqi Hasan, Mustafa Muhammad Mutawalli, 'Amir 'Atif Hasan, and 'Abdallah Mustafa were killed.

Weapons, ammunition, survival kits, and documents belonging to the terrorists' organization were found in the hideout.

Al-Minya security personnel and forensic experts left for the site of the incident and the Prosecutor's Office was informed in order to start an investigation.

Interior Ministry on Death of 'Terrorists'

NC1102181295 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1640 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 11 Feb (MENA)—A responsible security source at the Interior Ministry has disclosed that the security forces early this morning carried out the prosecution's order to arrest some fugitive terrorists who had transported terrorist Anwar Mahmud Mutawalli to the Maghaghah hospital last Saturday. Immediately on his arrival at the hospital, Mutawalli died as a result of the detonation of an explosive device.

In a statement today, the source said that the security agencies managed to identify the place where the diseased terrorist came from by means of the clothes he was wearing. The security agencies were aided by police dogs and advanced technological equipment.

When the forces early this morning surrounded the hideout and called on those inside to surrender, they were surprised by shots fired at them and were forced to return fire immediately.

The security source added that the clashes resulted in the death of four people. They were identified as: fugitive convict Mustafa Mahmud Mutawalli. He had been sentenced to a 10-year prison term in connection with case No. 19/94-military criminal code. He and his terrorist brother Anwar had specialized in manufacturing explosive material; fugitive terrorist 'Abdallah Mustafa Muhammad Darwish, a runaway suspect wanted in connection with many recent cases of violence in al-Minya Governorate; terrorist Hajjaj Dasuqi Hasan, a liaison agent between the organization's leaders in Maghaghah and other fugitives in Mallawi plantations; fugitive terrorist 'Amir 'Atif Muhammad Husayn, born in al-Basqalun, (Markaz al-'Adwah) in 1971 and unemployed.

When the hideout was searched, automatic weapons, pistols, and explosive charges were discovered. The prosecution has been notified and criminology laboratory and explosives experts went to check the scene and remove the debris.

'Vanguards' Case Referred to Military

NC1102180095 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1530 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 11 Feb (MENA)—The Military Judiciary Department today received the file of the Vanguards of Conquest case. The case involves 51 suspects who formed a terrorist organization to assassinate officials, attack installations and ministries, and blow up underground railway stations, the Public Transport garages, and the Abu Zu'bul and al-Qanatir al-Khayriyah electricity plants.

The State Security Prosecution's investigations of these suspects revealed that they had received instructions to commit these crimes from some imprisoned leaders of the Jihad Organization. The suspects admitted committing a number of crimes, including the assassination of a sentry soldier and stealing his weapon and killing three people when they robbed a jewelry shop in Cairo's al-Zaytun District.

The suspects also admitted that they had received funds from the fugitive suspect Yasir 'Ali Sirri following his escape to Yemen after participating in the attempted assassination of Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi. Sirri received a death sentence.

A presidential decree was issued last Monday referring the case to the military judiciary.

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi Receives Saddam Message on Kuwaiti POWS

LD1102211595 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The brother leader of the revolution has received brother Latif Nusayyif al-Jasim, the envoy of President Saddam Husayn of the Republic of Iraq and minister of labor and social affairs, has conveyed a message to the leader from the Iraqi president. The message affirms that there are no Kuwaiti prisoners of war in Iraq, that it is not in Iraq's interest to hold Kuwaiti prisoners, and that Iraq urges the Great Jamahiriyah and any other party to immediately carry out an inspection throughout Iraq to ascertain this.

The Iraqi president stresses that although Iraq has fulfilled all the commitments required of it, the United States wants to destroy the Iraqi people and the Arab nation.

Morocco

Official on Peace Talks, Economic Cooperation

LD1002141695 Rabat MAP in English 1241 GMT 10 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Casablanca, Feb. 10 (MAP)—The economic summit on the Middle East and North Africa, held last fall in Casablanca, associated the evolution of the peace process to economic cooperation, advisor to King Hassan II for economic and financial affairs Andre Azoulay said. Speaking during a follow-up debate on the conference, Azoulay underlined that if peace is to be credible and lasting, it should be translated on the short run by a change in the daily life of the population.

Partnership for the development of the region should not substitute the political debate that remains decisive and dominated by the fulfillment of the Palestinians' aspirations to live in their own state, Azoulay said. The sovereign's advisor stressed the need to speed up the negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians to pave the way for cooperation between the two peoples.

He also surveyed the progress made in implementing the recommendations of the Casablanca Conference, particularly the project to create a development bank for the Middle East and North Africa.

For his part, Moroccan Trade, Industry, Handicraft and External Trade Minister Driss Jettou said the summit was an opportunity for Morocco to present its potentials to foreign investors. Many international firms, including Philip Morris, ITT, Pepsi-Cola, showed during the conference keen interest to invest in Morocco, he said, before announcing that a tourism project will be carried out soon in northern Morocco in collaboration with foreign partners.

Foreign investments in Morocco recorded in 1994 a growth rate of 80 pc compared to 1993, said Jettou, who added that these investments were poured mainly in chemical, parachemical and textile and leather industries. Within the frame of the efforts exerted to promote Moroccan exports, Morocco will hold next may in Marrakech a 'Medpartnership' meeting.

Sudan

President al-Bashir Swears In New Ministers

EA1102204995 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in English 1800 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The newly appointed ministers today took oath of office before the president of the Republic, General 'Umar al-Bashir. Soon after the swearing [in] ceremony President al-Bashir met with the new ministers and thanked them for accepting their assignments. He hoped that the ministers would exert all their efforts to implement the policies of the National Salvation Revolution. Speaking in the same meeting, the minister of cabinet affairs, Dr. Awad Ahmad al-Jaz, said the aim of the reshuffle was to push the process of implementing the government programs forward.

Al-Bashir Accuses U.S. of International Terrorism

JN1202121095 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 12 Feb 95 p 23

[Report by Ahmad 'Abd-al-Majid in Baghdad]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Sudanese President 'Umar Ahmad al- Bashir has accused the United States of practicing international terrorism and described it as the No. 1 terrorist state.

Al-Bashir, who was speaking to Baghdad Youth Television, said Israel is the country with the worst human-rights record, and it receives Washington's care in spite of its repressive practices against the Palestinians, its tightening siege on them, its demolishing of their houses, and its restrictions on their movements.

The Sudanese president criticized Washington's position on incidents in his country and for attacking the unarmed Somali people by warplanes.

He revealed a U.S. plan to invade Sudan, similar to the U.S. occupation of Haiti. He emphasized that the Sudanese people are prepared to confront the invaders, and said the Sudanese Government will enlist 500,000 Sudanese volunteers, in addition to the regular forces and the local police force saying: All these are mujahidin who are waiting for those who will come on board barges and tanks to invade Sudan.

Al-Bashir expressed opposition to the peace efforts between the Arabs and Israel and said: The Arabs will not accept the existence of Israel, and what is going on does not represent their will. He described the Middle East peace plan as a plan designed to give Israel a free hand in the region, and that according to this plan Israel will be the center of economic, military, and political activities. [passage omitted]

New Foreign Minister on Human Rights Issues

EA1002202095 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 10 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Al-Ustadh [title of respect] Ali Uthman Muhammad Taha, the foreign minister, has affirmed that the war being conducted against Sudan now in the name of human rights is a political war that targets our faith [word indistinct] Islamic states. He said the road of authentication, along which the revolution is proceeding, is a road beset with dangers and difficulties.

However, dangers are always the fate of men. Addressing a ceremony held yesterday evening at the youth and children's palace, his excellency said Sudan today provided a unique experience to all world states. He said there was no retreat from the course followed by the revolution.

On the subject of the new ministerial reshuffles announced yesterday evening, he explained that they come within the context of one source of reference which is represented by the book [qur'an] and sunnah [words and actions attributed to the prophet Muhammad] and the implementation of the comprehensive national strategy, which defines the course of action to be taken in the country.

Machar Declares Cease-Fire; Group Takes Hostages

AB1002192595 London BBC World Service in English 1515 GMT 10 Feb 95

[From the "Focus on Africa" program]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] There has been yet another shift in the ever-changing splits and alliances in the southern Sudan rebel movements. The latest is an announcement by Riak Machar that his South Sudan Independence Movement, SSIM, [as heard] is declaring a unilateral cease-fire in its conflict with John Garang's SPLA [Sudanese People's Liberation Army], from which Machar broke away in 1991.

On the line to Nairobi, Robin White asked Riak Machar, why they were declaring a cease-fire:

[Begin recording] [Machar] This is an attempt to create conditions for reconciliation and peace between the two movements.

[White] Have they agreed to cease fire against you?

[Machar] I do not know. I have not yet had their response.

[White] But have you been discussing this with John Garang's SPLA?

[Machar] My committee on reconciliation and peace has made contacts with their peace committee.

[White] And how much progress has that made?

[Machar] Well, not that much, but we hope there would be progress because both movements need peace.

[White] But what's the point of you declaring a cease-fire if you haven't had assurances from John Garang?

[Machar] Well, we want to prove that we are for reconciliation and peace.

[White] So when might you be meeting John Garang?

[Machar] I do not know, Robin.

[White] If there is going to be a deal, how much will you share up jobs. Would you accept to be his number two?

[Machar] I am talking of peaceful coexistence of two movements, not organizational unity.

[White] But not a merger?

[Machar] No, not a merger. [end recording]

Meanwhile, a splinter group of the SSIM has been active in Upper Nile and has been giving the United Nations' Operation Lifeline Sudan, OLS, some headaches. In a raid on the town of Wa'th, rebel gunmen seized a number of foreign aid workers, taking them hostage. The release of some of them has been secured. On the line to Nairobi, Mary Harper asked Philip O'Brien of Operation Lifeline Sudan what the situation was:

[Begin recording] [O'Brien] Two days ago, Wa'th was attacked by a commander called Gordon Kam, and 11 of our people were taken hostage and moved in three United Nations and NGO [nongovernmental organizations] cars north of Wa'th. We made contact with them yesterday, and as of now we have managed to negotiate the release of six of the 11 hostages.

[Harper] And what about the other five?

[O'Brien] Right now, we have lost contact with the group who are holding them. They left the area where we were negotiating with them, which is a small village about 40 miles north of Wa'th. When we went back to resume negotiations, the local population told us that they had left and were traveling north to the town of Malakal.

[Harper] How are you managing to contact these abductors?

[O'Brien] The only way we can do it is by first of all getting an aircraft into the air to make an air search to visually identify the cars, and then to try and reach them on the mobile radios in the cars. That's the way we did it yesterday morning. That's what we will try to do today, and if necessary tomorrow morning.

[Harper] And where are the hostages that have actually been released?

[O'Brien] They are in a northern Kenyan base camp, Lokichokio.

[Harper] Have they said anything about the conditions under which they were being held?

[O'Brien] They were fairly well treated by the people that took them. They were... [pauses] except that all of their belongings were taken from them. They were allowed only to keep the clothes which they wore, and there were shortages of food and water for the first 24 hours, which seems to be not a deliberate attempt to starve the hostages, but was the condition also of the troops who were guarding them. [end recording]

Militia Releases Five Kidnapped Aid Workers

AB1102192395 London BBC World Service in English 1705 GMT 11 Feb 95

[From the "Focus on Africa" program]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The five aid workers kidnapped last Wednesday [8 February] by Sudanese militiamen were released today. They have been flown to the northern Kenyan town of Lokichokio, where they are said to be in good spirits. Their release, however, has signalled a general evacuation of staff from aid agencies in Sudan's increasingly insecure Upper Nile Region. From Nairobi, Jane Stanley reports.

[Begin Stanley recording] The five hostages were handed over to UN officials after an aerial reconnaissance plane, which had been monitoring their movements, landed nearby. Sally Burnham of the UN's Operation Lifeline Sudan said the five aid workers were all in good spirits. They were obviously relieved that their four-day ordeal was over. The armed militia, which had been holding them, had made no further demands, she said, although its members had not handed back three relief agency vehicles that they had taken along with the aid workers. Miss Burnham said the United Nations believed that the hostage-taking was an isolated incident and not the beginning of an extortion campaign by the militia, although they had demanded food and other supplies such as fuel, car tires, and shoes for the release of the hostages.

The militia are former members of the Sudanese rebel group, the South Sudan Independence Movement or SSIM. The SSIM leadership said they defected from the movement in November and are now fighting alongside forces of Khartoum's Islamic government. Recurrent splits in the largely Christian rebel groups are leading to increasing lawlessness in parts of southern Sudan, where the government has also embarked on a fierce dry season offensive in a bid to end the war once and for all. Increasing insecurity in Upper Nile has prompted the United Nations and relief agencies to evacuate all their staff in the province. Aid workers have also been withdrawn from East Equatoria, which borders Uganda, due to heavy fighting between government and rebel forces. [end recording]

Omdurman To Participate in Burundi Refugee Summit

EA1102171095 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Sudan will take part in the regional summit on refugees, displaced people, and returnees in the Great Lakes area which will be held in Burundi from 12 to 17 February. Mrs. Ihsan 'Abdallah al-Ghabshawi, minister of state for internal affairs and commissioner of refugees, who will head the Sudanese delegation to the regional conference, told the radio correspondent that the conference will discuss the issue of Rwandan and Burundian refugees who are staying in the neighboring countries. [passage omitted]

Bahrain

Hizballah Source on 'Support' for Opposition

NC1102105295 Beirut AL-DIYAR in Arabic 2 Feb 95 p 5

[Report by Malak 'Aqil]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Bahrain recently asked the Lebanese state to limit the anti-Bahraini activities of a very small number of non-Lebanese who reside in Beirut.

Official Bahraini sources said earlier that there is "coordination between Hizballah in Lebanon and some persons deported from Bahrain in 1981 who live in Beirut to distribute false and fabricated statements and to use Lebanese territory to carry out actions hostile to Bahrain, aimed at undermining its security and stability." [passage omitted]

A "Hizballah" source has said that Bahrain's regime is trying to find foreign influences in order to rationalize the people's antiregime stand. It stressed that "so far we have not seen in the Arab and Islamic worlds anyone who admits that domestic opposition exists. Everybody accuses the opposition of coming from abroad in order to hint that the opposition does not exist."

The source noted that "it is the Bahraini Government which is deporting its opponents to Britain and Lebanon then asking those countries not to give them shelter. As for the talk about coordination between "Hizballah" and the deportees, this exists only in the minds of the State of Bahrain in an attempt to justify its failure to deal with the Bahraini people's demands. The Bahraini opposition includes Islamists and secularists who have held contacts in Lebanon. These contacts have included "Hizballah" and a number of forces and parties. These talks dealt with the prevailing situations in Bahrain. If this is regarded as cooperation and coordination, then that is another matter." The source went on to say: "We know that the Bahraini opposition has a list of demands, including restoration of parliamentary life. But we have not heard any demands to bring down the Bahraini regime which has no solution for these demands other than repression and deportation in their attempts to end the crisis. But this is only escalating the confrontation between the two sides instead of leading to a calm and democratic discussion of these demands with the opposition. The causes of a confrontation, if it happens, will be domestic and will not need foreign influences to feed it, such as in Algeria where the regime is claiming that the opposition is being instigated from abroad when everyone knows that the crisis has local roots and has nothing to do with the outside world. The Bahraini authorities will use British and Saudi organs to confront the opposition. The Bahraini regime is tribal based and no more than a British protectorate."

The Hizballah source stressed that "the Bahraini opposition's demands are purely national; and we, Hizballah, can only sympathize with these demands and denounce all the deportations. We have heard that there is tendency to strip some of the opposition figures of their citizenship. By what logic can this be done in this era? We are absolutely not ashamed of our support for this opposition."

Women Demonstrators at Dissidents' Trial Arrested

NC1102141595 Paris AFP in English 1136 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nicosia, Feb 11 (AFP)—Dozens of women demonstrated in front of a Bahraini court on Saturday [11 February] demanding the release of prisoners held during unrest which flared in December and January, witnesses said Saturday.

Police swiftly broke up the demonstration in front of the high court in Manama which for the past few days has been holding the trials of those charged with inciting the unrest, an opposition member said contacted by AFP in Nicosia.

Several of the women were forced to get into public buses emptied of their original passengers to be driven away from the court, he added.

The trial is taking place in the absence of any defendants, and the hearing is purely based on their files.

The last unrest in the Gulf archipelago was reported on January 27 during the funerals of two Shiite Moslems killed by security forces and buried in the Shiite villages of Sitra, southeast of Manama, and Bani Jatmrah, northwest of the capital, opposition groups said.

On the same day the interior ministry warned "troublemakers trying to destabilise the country," saying they would be tried.

The unrest erupted in early December after the arrest of a leading Shiite cleric Shaykh 'Ali Salman who had demanded the restoration of parliament suspended in 1975. He has now fled to London where he has demanded political asylum.

It was the worst violence in the country since it gained its independence from Britain in 1971.

The opposition in exile has said around 3,000 people were arrested in the demonstrations and published the names of seven people they said were killed by security forces. But the Sunni-led Baharaini authorities have only acknowledged the death of one person.

Oman

Sultan Qabus Holds Talks With Yemeni President

JN1102183395 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Brothers Lieutenant General President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and His Majesty Sultan

Qabus Bin-Sa'id of Oman held a closed round of talks in the Omani city of Salalah today. The Yemeni News Agency, SABA', has learned that the two leaders discussed bilateral relations, ways of promoting them, regional developments, and efforts by the two fraternal countries to achieve Arab accord and solidarity.

The brother president briefed his brother His Majesty Sultan Qabus on developments in negotiations between Yemen and Saudi Arabia to end the Yemen-Saudi border problem. The brother president assured His Majesty Sultan Qabus that our country is eager to solve the border problem with the brothers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia based on peaceful dialogue, which will ensure the legitimate rights of both parties, lay a strong groundwork for stable and brotherly relations between the two neighboring countries, and reinforce security and peace in the region. He then referred to the sincere initiative our country has launched to achieve that goal, and said that the basis used to solve the Yemeni-Omani border issue is a good example for solving border problems among the brothers.

The two leaders also discussed several Arab issues and international developments of mutual interest.

Brother Lt. Gen. President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih arrived in the city of Salalah this afternoon on a brotherly visit to fraternal Oman to hold talks with his brother His Majesty Sultan Qabus Bin- Sa'id of Oman on bilateral relations, current Arab issues, and regional developments, including current negotiations between our country and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to solve the border problem between the two neighboring countries. [passage omitted]

Qatar

Minister Urges Arabs To Heal Rifts With Iraq

NC1202091895 Paris AFP in English 0908 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Doha, Feb 12 (AFP)—Qatar on Sunday urged Arab countries to heal their rifts with Iraq caused by the 1990-1991 Gulf crisis.

Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Al Thani told state television: "We must treat Iraq in a humanitarian way to bring it back into Arab ranks, in preparation for its return to the international community.

"How can we accept this humiliation of the Iraqi people, which is a disgrace for Arabs?" the minister said.

Unlike other Gulf Arab states, Qatar maintained good relations with Iraq following its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait and seven-month occupation of the emirate.

However, Oman and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have recently called for an easing of sanctions on Iraq, imposed by the United Nations after the invasion.

Shaykh Hamad also said a dispute between Iran and the UAE over three Gulf islands should be settled peacefully or through recourse to the International Court of Justice in the Hague.

Iran was an important country whose "role in the region must not be ignored," he said.

Saudi Arabia

Officials Hold Border Talks With Yemen in Riyadh

Accord on Marking Border

NC1202120895 Paris AFP in English 1126 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riyadh, Feb 12 (AFP)—Saudi Arabia has agreed in principle to mark out the whole of its border with Yemen and dropped opposition to possible international arbitration if they fail to agree, the Yemeni deputy prime minister said Sunday.

'Abd-al-Qadir Ba-Jammal said talks here had agreed "to proceed with marking out the whole border between the two countries."

He is with a Yemeni delegation to talks with the Saudis here which began on January 23 in a bid to solve a long-standing dispute over their border.

The dispute centres on the three provinces of Najran, Jizan and 'Asir, which have been under Saudi control since an agreement in 1934.

Sanaa maintains the agreement expired in 1992 and is against it being renewed.

"Riyadh is no longer reticent to the principle of resorting to arbitration" if their differences continue, Ba-Jammal added.

"The negotiators have accomplished 80 percent of their mission, aimed at drawing up a memorandum of understanding on the ways of solving the outstanding problems between the two countries," he said.

Syria and Egypt have been mediating in the dispute which has flared up into armed clashes, the last on January 10 in which more than 50 people were killed, according to diplomats.

Yemen also accused Saudi Arabia of massing troops on the border last month after the Riyadh talks had begun.

A Yemeni official said Saturday the talks were in "an impasse" as Riyadh "rejects a Yemeni proposal to demarcate the whole of the common frontier," from the Omani-Saudi-Yemen triangle to the Red Sea.

Defense Minister: Talks 'Amicable'

LD1202211895 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Yesterday evening Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, second deputy prime minister,

minister of defense and aviation, and inspector general, presided over the 18th session of the selection committee of the King Faysal Foundation's international award for services to Islam at the offices of the King Faysal charitable foundation in Riyadh. [passage omitted]

After the meeting, the second deputy prime minister made the following statements:

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent] What can you tell us about the meeting?

[Prince Sultan] The meeting went well. God willing, it will serve Islam and Muslims via this charitable organization which is always aspiring to grow. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Does your highness mind if I ask political questions?

[Prince Sultan] Carry on.

[Correspondent] Where have the Saudi-Yemeni negotiations reached so far?

[Prince Sultan] They are continuing well, and in an amicable and fraternal atmosphere.

[Correspondent] Do you expect a solution in the near future?

[Prince Sultan] I cannot interfere in the work of bilateral committees. The committees are working in an amicable and fraternal manner. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Papers View King Fahd's Hafar al-Batin Speech

LD1102142795 Riyadh SPA in English 1230 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riyadh, Feb 11, SPA—The Saudi newspapers shed light today on a number of topics.

Commenting on the speech delivered by Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz before the commanders and officers of the armed forces in Hafar al-Batin last Wednesday, Jeddah-based AL-BILAD said the speech dealt with all pros and cons of several issues and clarified the kingdom's stands on them.

In his speech, the monarch made it clear that the kingdom does not interfere in the domestic affairs of the others and at the same time it does not allow the others to interfere in its domestic affairs, the paper said.

On the same topic, Mecca-based AL-NADWAH said in his speech the monarch has warned those who might plan to threaten the kingdom and said the kingdom will always be ready to make sacrifices for the defence of its territories. The monarch has clarified the basis of the Saudi policy and its relations with the others and reiterated his keenness in enhancing relations with the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] member states, the daily said.

The kingdom does not create problems for to [as received] others and nor does it allow any party to create problems for it, it added. Moreover King Fahd said the problems between the kingdom and Yemen would be easily solved through negotiations and peaceful means.

On the peace process in the Middle East, AL-MADINAH, which is published in Jeddah, said the talks of some Arab parties with Israel would not succeed if Israel continued to expect more concessions from the Arab side. It is high time for the Israelis to say frankly what do they mean by the word 'peace', the daily added.

On the same topic 'UKAZ, which is also published in Jeddah, said the outcome of the recent Palestinian-Israeli talks has made it clear that no breakthrough has taken place in the talks. The peace- loving forces and the supporters of the peace process should not leave the matter to the taste of Rabin and the environment of Israeli elections or to the opposers of the peace process either extremist Palestinians or extremist Jews who resort to violence as the public opinion inclines towards peace, security and stability, the daily elaborated.

United Arab Emirates

Yemeni President Salih Visits Abu Dhabi

Discusses Saudi Border Dispute

NC1202112595 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2225 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Abu Dhabi, 11 Feb (MENA)—Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih left Abu Dhabi tonight at the end of a visit of several hours to the United Arab Emirates [UAE]. During the visit the Yemeni president held talks with UAE President Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan on the Arab situation, talks between Yemen and Saudi Arabia on the border issue, and relations between Yemen and the UAE.

[In a related Abu Dhabi-datelined report, Paris AFP in English at 0005 GMT on 12 February adds the following: "Yemen's President 'Ali Abdallah Salih arrived here late Saturday for talks with Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan on Sanaa's border conflict with Saudi Arabia, the official news agency WAM reported.

["Salih came from Oman, where he asked Sultan Qabus Bin-Sai'd to mediate in the dispute.

["WAM said Salih informed Zayid of the progress of negotiations to resolve the conflict."]

Meets With Shaykh Zayid

JN1202091095 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0525 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Abu Dhabi, 11 Feb (WAKH)—His Highness Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan, president of the United Arab Emirates, tonight held a bilateral meeting with Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih who arrived in Abu Dhabi this evening.

The Emirates News Agency has said that the meeting dealt with fraternal relations, regional developments, the current situation in the Arab world, and efforts to clear the Arab atmosphere and restore Arab solidarity and joint Arab action.

The agency said the Yemeni president briefed His Highness Shaykh Zayid on the developments in the talks currently underway between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Republic of Yemen on borders and the initiatives Yemen has launched in this regard.

The agency added that His Highness Shaykh Zayid blessed the dialogue between Saudi Arabia and Yemen. He expressed hope that the goals sought in this dialogue will be realized through patience.

Briefs Shaykh Zayid on Border Talks

LD1202112695 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1015 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Abu Dhabi, 12 Feb 1995—It has been announced here that the Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih briefed President of the United Arab Emirates Shaykh Zayid Bin Sultan Al Nuhayyan during their talks last night about the developments of the current negotiations between Yemen and Saudi Arabia over the borders between the two countries.

A UAE [United Arab Emirates] news agency reported that Shaykh Zayid Bin Sultan "has blessed the fraternal dialogue between the two brotherly countries, expressing hopes that the dialogue would achieve the desired goals by patience and without haste."

The Yemeni president yesterday [word indistinct] made two short visits to the Sultanate of Oman and UAE.

The agency added that President Salih's meeting with Shaykh Zayid dealt with the issues concerning the fraternal and fresh relations in the regional arena, the current situation in the Arab world, the efforts made to clear up the Arab atmosphere and restore the joint Arab action and solidarity.

Earlier yesterday, Ali Abdallah Salih held talks in [word indistinct] with Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id "which focused on what seemed to be an Omani mediation between Saudi Arabia and Yemen to resolve the border dispute between them."

In this respect, a UAE news agency said that during the in camera talks between President Salih and Sultan Qabus " views were brought closer within the framework of the Yemeni-Saudi dialogue."

It is worth mentioning that for three weeks Saudi Arabia has been hosting Yemeni-Saudi negotiations to resolve the border dispute and relations between the two countries.

Minister Rejects Joint Israeli Development Bank

MM1002170495 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 10 Feb 95 pp1, 4

[Report by Shafiq al-Asadi: "Emphasizing That 'There Is No Benefit in Arab-Israeli Cooperation,' UAE 'Categorically Rejects' Middle East Development Bank"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Abu Dhabi—The United Arab Emirates [UAE] has "categorically rejected" the idea of a Middle East finance firm or development bank with Israeli participation. That idea is sponsored by the United States and Israel. It said that the aim of the current Israeli moves is to direct Arab funds toward development of the Israeli economy.

As U.S. Trade Secretary Ron Brown begins a visit to Abu Dhabi, the UAE said the "risks of all that is now being proposed about a Middle East market or development bank should be avoided." It emphasized that "there is no political or economic advantage in cooperation between the Arab states and Israel."

It urged discussion of all aspects of peace, its costs, and its burdens for us and the coming generations, and it stressed that "not the Middle East and not the Near East but the Arab homeland is the regional framework we are interested in."

It wondered "is it legitimate to tie Arab funds to projects which serve Israel and solve its economic problems?" It reaffirmed that the Arab boycott is a natural right guaranteed under all international laws and traditions.

This stated UAE position on political and economic issues relating to the peace settlement in the Middle East and related development projects came in a long interview with Minister of State for Financial and Industrial Affairs Ahmad Humayd al-Tayir published in Abu Dhabi yesterday [no further details given].

Observers see the interview as a "political declaration" stating the UAE position on the various current developments in the region and projects planned with the support of the United States and Israel. They emphasize that the interview was a departure from the nature of the usual interviews and economic statements coming out of the Ministry of Finance and Industry in recent years.

The observers also point out that the interview coincides with the start of U.S. Trade Secretary Ron Brown's visit to Abu Dhabi yesterday. [passage omitted]

Al-Tayir says that "the Arab world does not need a development establishment or bank with Israeli participation. That aspect must remain one of the unacceptable things. There is no economic or political advantage in cooperation between the Arab states and Israel."

He adds that "before talking or thinking about the creation of a Middle East market, there should be a balance of security and economic interests, and the Arab homeland should be politically, economically, and socailly secure against the policies of hegemony and fait accompli." [passage omitted]

He also says that "on the question of a Middle East market, we should discuss whether it would include all the states around the Arab world such as Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan or is it meant to just include the Arab states and Israel.... The significance of that and its effects on the Arabs and their future should be discussed."

He stresses that what is being proposed now is a merger of Israel into the Arab economies and greater cooperation between the two sides on the basis of the peace agreements concluded.

He expresses "the belief that the risks of that must be evaded. The Arab states have worked for a just peace, and still do, but that has not been achieved yet. Israel is occupying territories of Arab states and it is now a nuclear power, which is a major challenge to the Arab states. There should be economic security before cooperation can be contemplated." [passage omitted]

He further says that "the aim of what is being said about opening a canal between the Mediterranean and and the Dead Sea is to divert international trade from the Suez Canal to that canal which, far from serving Arab trade, would be greatly detrimental to the Suez Canal and the Arab oil pipelines, and would divert trade from Arab ports to Israeli ports."

He affirms that "Arab contribution to such projects, be it a bank or other regional arrangements, cannot be accepted despite the disappearance of numerous prohibitions" as a result of the current Arab situation and the international and regional changes. He asks: "Would it be legitimate to steer Arab funds toward serving the Israeli economy, strengthening Israel's economic role, and creating thousands of work opportunities for the Israeli immigrants and settlers in Palestine? And are we to agree to have the Arab economies linked to Israeli projects and, accordingly, link the future of the Arab generations to such projects? Have we not had had enough of what foreign occupation of Arab states in the past decades caused in terms of economic, cultural, political, and social backwardness?" [passage omitted]

Yemen

House Speaker Praises Fahd Statements on Talks

JN1002215195 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 10 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar, speaker of the House of Representatives, has said that the speech by King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, is worthy of comment. It is not easy to find the right words to give his statements their due praise, because these statements have entered out hearts and captured them. This was the first official reaction to the statements by the custodian of the two holy mosques on the negotiations to end the border differences and to restore Saudi-Yemeni relations to their normal status. In his statements, King Fahd stressed the two countries' eagerness to settle and finalize all pending problems between the two fraternal countries based on [words indistinct].

In statements to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT newspaper published the day before yesterday, the speaker of the House of Representatives said that the statements by the custodian of the two holy mosques on the Yemeni and Saudi delegations [words indistinct] forward and toward the success of the work in the dialogue currently being held among the brothers in Riyadh. He said that these statements by the custodian of the two holy mosques will encourage negotiators from both sides to quickly solve the border problem between the two fraternal countries. He added that it is no surprise for us to hear such fine statements from King Fahd. He said: This is what I heard from him when I had the privilege of meeting him in late Rajab [last December] when I visited the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. I heard things from him that elated me and encouraged me to play my current role.

Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar said: There is no doubt that the statements by the custodian of the two holy mosques will have a positive impact, both inside the kingdom and inside and outside Yemen. This because they represent fatherly talk that comes straight from the heart and enters the hearts of all those who listen to him with admiration and in love and appreciation for the custodian of the two holy mosques. I can only say to him: Thank you to the custodian of the two holy mosques and the leader of the Muslims. [passage omitted]

Foreign Minister Views NPT, Talks With Riyadh

NC1102114695 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 11 Feb 95

[Telephone interview with Dr.'Abd-al-Karim al-Iryani, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, in Sanaa, by Muhammad al-Aswad in Cairo; date not given; from the "Dialogue From Afar" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-Aswad] Welcome to Voice of the Arabs Dr. al-Iryani.

[Al-Iryani] Thank you.

[Al-Aswad] Saudi King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz has recently expressed, with full conviction, that ultimately there will be no problems between Saudi Arabia and Yemen. He called for establishing friendly, sound, bilateral relations that do not change with the circumstances. How does Sanaa view King Fahd's remarks about Saudi-Yemeni ties?

[Al-Iryani] We welcome this sound opinion, but it must be realized with actions.

[Al-Aswad] A Yemeni delegation is now in Riyadh for talks with Saudi officials to conclude a memorandum of understanding on ways to resolve the outstanding problems between Sanaa and Riyadh. How is the delegation's work proceeding and have any important results been achieved regarding these problems?

[Al-Iryani] The negotiations are not over yet. They seek a memorandum of understanding on ways to resolve problems between the two countries with respect to bilateral ties as well as the border dispute. As I have mentioned, many of the restrictions imposed in 1990 are still in place. God willing, we hope that these negotiations will lead to a memorandum of understanding on the basis of which the negotiations on the border dispute could be built and the restrictions placed on bilateral relations could end. For instance, Yemen is still not permitted to have more than four diplomats at its embassy in Riyadh, while we have not placed any restrictions on the Saudi embassy in Sanaa.

[Al-Aswad] As we know, the recent state of Saudi-Yemeni relations required intervention by some Arab parties to mediate between the two. How would you describe the mediation efforts of the Arab parties with respect to the situation on the border between Saudi Arabia and Yemen?

[Al-Iryani] Those efforts were fruitful and have defused tension between the two countries.

[Al-Aswad] Yemen's foreign policy at present focuses on reaching a common understanding and interpretation of the al-Ta'if Treaty of 1934 regarding the borders with Saudi Arabia. Apart from that, how do you view the efforts to reach inter-Arab reconciliation and what efforts is Yemen making in this regard?

[Al-Iryani] Lately, I have heard some talk about inter-Arab reconciliation, but I absolutely fail to see any results or proof. As I have stated, if trade between two neighboring Arab states is not allowed, how could there be an inter-Arab reconciliation?

[Al-Aswad] Finally, Dr. al-Iryani, the renewal of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] by the Arab states is now being raised at various levels. Egypt's position is clear. It calls on Israel to sign this treaty as a prerequisite for Cairo to sign the treaty. What does Sanaa think of the Egyptian stand?

[Al-Iryani] Sanaa's position will be the same as the Arab position. But if the Arabs adopt various positions, then it will constitute another proof that there is no common Arab position and no inter-Arab reconciliation.

[Al-Aswad] Thank you, Dr. al-Iryani from the Voice of the Arabs.

[Al-Iryani] Thank you.

Oman Asked To Help Break Deadlock in Saudi Talks

NC1202081495 Paris AFP in English 2159 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sanaa, Feb 11 (AFP)—Yemen asked Oman on Saturday to help break the deadlock in Sanaa's border dispute with Saudi Arabia, a Yemeni official said.

"A possible mediation by the Sultanate" of Oman was raised during talks Saturday between Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and his Omani counterpart Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id in the Omani city of Salalah, the official told AFP.

Yemen and Saudi Arabia began talks on January 23 in Riyadh in a bid to resolve their dispute over the provinces of Najran, Jizan and 'Asir, which have been under Saudi control since an agreement in 1934.

Sanaa maintains the agreement expired in 1992.

The OMANI NEWS AGENCY earlier said that the two leaders met in Salalah, 1,000 kilometers (600 miles) south of the capital Muscat, to discuss the "current negotiations on the dispute in order to reach a solution guaranteeing peace and stability in the region."

The Yemeni official, who requested anonymity, said the Yemen-Saudi "talks are at an impasse" as Riyadh "rejects a Yemeni proposal to demarcate the whole of the common frontier," from the Omani- Saudi-Yemen triangle to the Red Sea.

Riyadh, he said, had insisted negotiations stick to the disputed areas in northeast Yemen, which were mentioned in the accord struck 61 years ago in the Saudi city of al-Ta'if.

Riyadh also opposed a possible recourse to international arbitration if differences cannot be bridged.

In the Saudi capital, a Yemeni negotiator told AFP that the talks were to break off later Saturday and would resume in the first week of March.

He said "some progress was achieved" although many unspecified differences had to be studied later.

Syria and Egypt have been mediating in the dispute which has flared up into armed clashes, the last being on January 10 in which more than 50 people were killed, according to diplomats.

Yemen also accused Saudi Arabia of massing troops on the border later last month after the negotiations in Riyadh had begun.

President Salih Returns From Oman, UAE Visits

JN1202140695 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Brother President Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih has returned to al-Mukalla in the Hadhramaut Governorate after two short fraternal visits to the Sultanate of Oman and the United Arab Emirates [UAE]. He met with brothers His Majesty Sultan Qabus Bin-Sai'd and His Highness UAE President Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan. Discussions during the two visits dealt with relations with the two fraternal countries, Arab issues, and regional developments, especially the border negotiations between our country and the brothers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in addition to coordinating efforts to clear the Arab air and restore Arab solidarity. [passage omitted]

Brother Lieutenant General President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and his Highness Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan, the UAE's president, met in a closed session in Abu Dhabi last night. The Yemeni News Agency, SABA' has learned that the discussion at this session dealt with fraternal relations, developments on the regional level, and issues and developments of interest to our Arab nation, particularly attempts to clear the Arab air and restore Arab solidarity to enhance joint Arab action and substantiate the Arab nation's objectives.

The brother president briefed his brother Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan on developments in the current border negotiations between our country and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the initiatives our country has put forth to resolve the border problem through fraternal dialogue, within the framework of the principle of harming no one, and in a manner that will secure the two parties their legitimate rights and enhance fraternal relations between the two neighboring countries, as well as stability and peace in the region. [passage omitted]

Radio Says Saudi Border Talks 'Foundering'

JN1202191695 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 12 Feb 95

[Report by Faysal Mukarram in Sanaa]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yemeni President Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih's surprise visits to the Sultanate of Oman and the United Arab Emirates yesterday have taken place as the current Yemeni-Saudi negotiations which have been going on in Riyadh for approximately three weeks are foundering. The two sides have failed to achieve positive results with respect to the 60-year-old border dispute between the two countries.

Informed Yemeni sources say that the purpose of the Yemeni president's visit to Muscat and Abu Dhabi was to brief Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id and Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan of the Yemeni stand on the issue of borders with Saudi Arabia and why these negotiations have foundered despite the concessions Sanaa had offered, concessions it would not have offered had it not been eager and sincere to render the negotiations a success, enhance the fraternal bonds between the two neighbor countries, and safeguard their security and stability in a manner that will have a positive impact on the entire region.

The sources said that the Yemeni negotiating team carried out many attempts with the Saudi side to reach agreement on a common concept that will help solve the border problem between them. However, these attempts encountered Saudi insistence on imposing the Saudi concept on how to solve the problem. This will result in one of two things: Either accept this concept or fail to achieve any results.

In this respect, the Yemeni Government emphasizes that the issue of Yemen's borders with Saudi Arabia is an indivisible whole that cannot be partitioned and that this is the basic principle by which the Yemeni Government abides in the negotiations, in addition to viewing the 1934 al-Ta'if agreement as an integrated system in the negotiations and resorting to arbitration only if a disagreement on any of the provisions of the agreement cannot be settled through bilateral dialogue as stipulated in the arbitration document attached to the agreement.

In a related development, a Yemeni source said that the Yemeni Government still hopes that a solution can be reached to the border problem within the framework of fraternal dialogue and not through the recourse to force. The source said that the Yemeni Government will spare no efforts in this direction, and if the disagreement persists in view of the Saudi brothers' insistence on dictating their concept, then arbitration will become a necessity for the two sides on the basis of the legal and historical rights of the two parties, the principle that no harm should result, and in a manner that safeguards sovereignty, security, and stability in the two neighbor countries.

PUK Paper: Saddam Appoints Son Intelligence Chief

NC1002164495 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1530 GMT 10 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Citing a reliable source, newspaper KURDISTAN NWAY, the daily mouthpiece of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK], reports today that the head of the 'Aflaqite regime in Baghdad has dismissed the so-called 'Abd Hasan al-Majid, who was recently appointed as the chief of the intelligence service vice Sabir al-Duri.

The source said that the dismissal of al-Majid was due to the revelation of several assassination operations in Iraq and abroad by the Iraqi intelligence henchmen. Iraqi intelligence is responsible for the assassination of German journalist Schmit in Kurdistan and Ghalib al-Suhayl, a leading Iraqi opposition figure in Lebanon.

It is worth mentioning that Qusayy Saddam, son of the head of the Iraqi regime, is currently in charge of the intelligence service.

Official: Clinton 'Threat' Remarks 'Ridiculous'

NC1002140495 Paris AFP in English 1212 GMT 10 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, Feb 10 (AFP)—US President Bill Clinton's charges that Iraq remained a threat to the United States are "ridiculous and untrue," an official said here Friday [10 February].

"This is an untrue and ridiculous statement which has nothing to do with reality," a member of the ruling Ba'th party's foreign relations department, Sa'id Qasim Hammudi, told AFP.

"Bill Clinton's comments are a regurgitation of old accusations that contradict the reports of the UN special commission" tasked with Iraq's disarmament after the January-February 1991 Gulf war, he added.

"How could Iraq pose such a threat to US national security after four years of embargo," the Iraqi official said in a reference to the UN sanctions imposed on Iraq after its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Clinton on Wednesday said Iraq deserved continued sanctions because President Saddam Husayn "kept on violating basic human rights of its own citizens," and remained "an unusual and extraordinary threat" to Washington.

The Ba'th party's AL-THAWRAH newspaper said Clinton is "managing the Republicans who control Congress and wants to divert attention from sex and financial scandals."

Paper Alleges U.S. Ships Uranium From Somalia

JN1202170795 Baghdad INA in English 1150 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, Feb 12, INA—An Iraqi daily said the American designs behind invading Somalia were of an overt political and commercial nature.

The paper, mouthpiece of the Ba'th Party wrote today the U.S. troops mission that have earlier invaded Somalia in the times of former U.S. President George Bush tenure was not human by all means, rather, it was an incisive imperialism.

The paper has assigned reports indicating America's looting of Somalia's uranium during the invasion underscoring that none had been deceived by the U.S. ploy of the so-called operation (Restoring Hope) propagated by U.S. policymakers since they were only a blanket to ship uranium from various parts of Somalia into the United States.

The then allegations aired by the Bush administration around restoring hope for the Somalians had come to be scrupulously questionable because the U.S. troops were deployed in Somalia, notwithstanding the many other nations in Africa and the world which were in a far more need for restoring hope for their war and famine ravaged peoples, the paper explained.

The paper concluded that America's invasion of Somalia has exhausted not only the Somalians slight rays of expectations but also the country's natural wealth when they meant to change the geographical features of Somali uranium mines and to mine them so that indiginate people could make no hay of them. [sentence as received].

The paper has scolded that behaviour by America as tending to boom at the expense of world's peoples showing no respect of their national freedom and will into independence and sovereignty.

Opposition Claims 'Fierce Battles' in South

NC1202103395 Paris AFP in English 0950 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nicosia, Feb 12 (AFP)—Fierce battles have erupted in southern Iraq between the army of President Saddam Husayn and opposition forces, the Iraqi opposition said Sunday [12 February].

"Fierce battles have been raging in the Qurnah region," at the intersection of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, 400 kilometres (240 miles) southeast of Baghdad, the Iraqi National Congress opposition coalition said.

It said the fighting began before dawn on Saturday, but gave no reports of any casualties.

"The 4th army corps forces have retreated because of the attacks by Mujahidin" or Moslem fighters, it added in a statement received in Cyprus.

Qurnah is located in Iraq's southern marshlands, where Moslem Shiite opposition groups have been hiding out since an abortive uprising against Saddam and his army in March 1991, a month after the Gulf War.

The Iraqi airforce cannot fly over southern Iraq as US, British and French warplanes have been enforcing an air exclusion zone over this area since 1992.

Washington, London and Paris say the no-fly-zone is aimed at protecting the Moslem Shiites population in the region from Saddam, a Moslem Sunni.

PUK Accuses KDP of 'Terrorism,' Killing POW's

MM1302144095 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 11 Feb 95 p6

[FBIS Translated Text] London, AL-HAYAH—A spokesman for the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] in London has stated that forces of the Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP] killed five PUK fighters on the morning of the day before yesterday. He said that the five "had been taken prisoner during the Rawandoz battles" between the two parties in northern Iraq on 7 February.

The spokesman for the PUK (led by Jalal Talabani) said that the KDP (led by Mas'ud Barzani) "and its intelligence organ Parastin [as transliterated] are encouraging acts of terrorism and bombing against citizens and their homes, economic foundations, and vital utilities of the government of the Iraqi Kurdistan region. The aim of these operations is to cut off power supplies, blow up bridges, and open fire on people who work for foreign and relief organizations." He added that "the murder of the five POW's was an abominable violation of the principles of human rights and of laws and traditions." He mentioned the "explosives thrown at the homes of Ahmad 'Abd-al-'Aziz, official in charge of the (Kurdish) parliamentary bureau in al-Sulaymaniyah; Brigadier General Sayfallah 'Ali, commander of al-Sulaymaniyah post; and artist 'Uthman 'Ali."

The PUK spokesman said that his party "again calls on the KDP to renounce terrorism, stop harming members of the public, respond to the cease-fire efforts, and return to the method of solving problems through dialogue and through the Kurdish parliamentary institutions" in northern Iraq.

Rebel Radio: Saddam Prepares Marshlands Offensive

NC1202152295 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1445 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Our news sources in the south have confirmed that tyrant Saddam is preparing to launch an extensive aggression on all the marshland areas. The sources said several divisions and brigades have taken up offensive positions opposite the marshlands.

The sources noted that the inhabitants of the marshlands and the brave mujahidin are prepared to defend themselves against any insane attempt by the Saddamist aggressive regime.

Paper Urges 'Firm Stand' on Israel Nuclear Facilities

JN1202115995 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0800 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 12 Feb (INA)—The newspaper AL-QADISIYAH has urged Arab and Islamic states to take a firm stand toward the issue of disarmament, and to make an effort to subject the Zionist entity's nuclear installations to international monitoring.

In a study published today, the paper adds that the settler Zionist entity seeks to maintain its monopoly of nuclear capability in the region, and deny the countries of the region access to nuclear capability, even if it is to be for peaceful purposes.

The paper goes on to say: The Zionist entity, whose inception was the outcome of a colonialist plan, aims to keep the Arab homeland backward and controlled by colonialist powers.

The paper cites this entity's strike against the Iraqi nuclear reactor, which was built for peaceful purposes, as well as its efforts to strike at the Pakistani reactor in 1986 and destroy any Arab or Islamic quest for nuclear capability.

It is only reasonable that the achievement of peace requires that all countries comply with the provisions of a uniform regime in this regard, the paper argues. World peace cannot be achieved as long as there is a single state that holds the key to power unchallenged. Such a state of affairs is bound to render peace vulnerable and violable.

Concluding its study, the paper urges the countries that will take part in the Cairo conference, due to convene in April, to reduce the proliferation of nuclear arms and subject the Zionist entity's nuclear installations to international inspection and monitoring if this region is to remain an area free of weapons of mass destruction.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Meets With Leaders

Shows 'Understanding' for Security Problems

TA1102131395 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Viktor Posuvalyuk last night conferred with Prime Minister Rabin and Deputy Foreign Minister Beilin.

The Russian official showed understanding for Israel's security problems, particularly in view of the wave of terror. He expressed concern at the economic deterioration in the territories, which he thought would lead to further extremism there.

Posuvalyuk, who previously visited Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan, said Lebanon had a strong interest in making peace with Israel as quickly as possible. He believes that as soon as progress was made in the negotiations with Syria, Lebanon would sign a peace treaty with Israel.

The Russian deputy foreign minister is due to participate in the meeting of the foreign ministers of the United States, Egypt, Israel, and Jordan, and the PLO in Washington tomorrow.

Relays Syrian Disappointment With U.S.

TA1202121295 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 12 Feb 95 p A7

[Report by political correspondent Aluf Ben]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Viktor Posuvalyuk last Friday [10 February] visited Israel and held working meetings with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin. His Middle East visit is in preparation for Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev's visit to the region in late March.

At the opening of the meeting, Posuvalyuk relayed to Rabin greetings from Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin. He expressed support for "the Israeli Government's courageous policy in the peace process" and conveyed condolences to the families of terror victims.

Posuvalyuk said that "the recent events in Chechnya have strengthened our belief that it is necessary to wage an extremely firm struggle against Muslim fundamentalism. The issue will also be raised during Foreign Minister Kozyrev's visit." Posuvalyuk said: "We spoke with the Syrians about the activity of Islamic Jihad leader Fathi al-Shaqaqi in Damascus. We explained to them that this activity endangers the peace process and must be stopped."

Rabin opened his remarks by describing terrorism as an obstacle to peace, saying that "the peace process is at a critical stage and that the continuation of terrorism will prevent us from making progress. Some 90 percent of the terror acts are being perpetrated by Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and al-Shaqaqi's Islamic Jihad. We decided to go on with the negotiations with the Palestinians despite terrorism, but to postpone the implementation."

The prime minister briefed the guest about his meeting with Yasir 'Arafat last Thursday. He explained his demand that 'Arafat deal with terrorism more firmly, adding that his main demand was for the Palestinian Authority to outlaw the extremist organizations. Rabin referred to the Iran-Lebanon-Libya axis as a terror "triangle."

He said that "a struggle is being waged from this triangle against the moderate Arab regimes." Posuvalyuk said he understands Israel's security problems and the measures taken by Israel to minimize the attacks—such as the closure—but expressed concern that these developments might exacerbate the economic hardship, a thing that will inevitably lead to frustration and extremism in the Palestinian camp. Posuvalyuk reported to Rabin his impressions of his visits to Damascus, Beirut, and Amman, which preceded his visit to Israel. [passage omitted]

[Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew on 12 February, in a related report by Pe'erli Shahar on page 3, adds: "Syria is very pessimistic about prospects for progress in the peace talks with Israel and believes the United States is not doing what it should do to promote the process. This is the impression gained by Viktor Posuvalyuk in Damascus, which he relayed to his interlocutors in Jerusalem."

[The report adds: "The Syrians told Posuvalyuk that they believe President Clinton has been greatly weakened in the wake of the great Republican victory in Congress and is now concentrating on domestic rather than foreign affairs. As al-Asad put it: 'The Americans cannot deliver the goods.'"]

[Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew on 12 February, in a page-2 report by Moti Bassok on Posuvalyuk's meeting with Rabin, adds: "Sources in Jerusalem yesterday claimed that in view of the stalemate in the process and after the United States has lowered its profile and presence, the EU and Russia are moving into the vacuum that has been created. Last Friday Posuvalyuk asked that Russia be allowed to participate in the Washington meeting today. Israel agreed to this request; consequently, Posuvalyuk himself will represent Russia in the meeting."]

Rabin Says Under 30% for Peace Process

TA1202184495 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 12 Feb 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has said that less than 30 percent of the Israeli public support the peace process.

Our political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen said that Rabin was speaking at a meeting with Viktor Posuvalyuk, the Russian president's envoy to the Middle East. The Russian envoy briefed Rabin on his Damascus meetings with the representatives of the Palestinian Rejectionist Front who promised him they would not sabotage the continuation of the peace process.

Al-Asad Said Prepared for 'Total Peace'

TA1202153695 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 12 Feb 95 pp 1, 2

[Report by political correspondent Aluf Ben]

[FBIS Translated Text] Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad is prepared to establish peace relations with Israel similar to those with Jordan and Egypt in return for a total withdrawal. This is according to a report which reached Jerusalem about al-Asad's meeting with Maltese Foreign Minister Guido de Marco, who visited Syria late last month.

Al-Asad told the Maltese foreign minister: "There is no need to negotiate over the return of the Golan because that has been decided in many international resolutions. I am not willing to consider a compromise on the issue. I understand that in return for a total withdrawal I will have to give total peace." De Marco asked al-Asad what he meant by "total peace." Al-Asad replied: "Within a peace framework, Syria will have good relations with Israel, like Egypt and Jordan have."

Referring to a possible meeting with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, al-Asad said: "President Anwar al-Sadat was murdered not because he made peace with Israel, but because of the shameful way he behaved; for instance, by addressing the Knesset. I will not agree to meet with any Israeli leader as long as occupied Syrian land is in Israeli hands."

The Syrian president particularly praised his Israeli counterpart 'Ezer Weizman. He said "Weizman understands the situation and is prepared to return what belongs to us without superfluous debates and in an honorable way."

In the discussions, al-Asad expressed disappointment with the U.S. role in the peace process because of the restrictions imposed on its actions. He said he respects President Bill Clinton and Secretary of States Warren Christopher. "But they have been weakened following the congressional elections, and it is doubtful whether Clinton can do what he wanted to do. The Jewish lobby also exerts pressure on the administration."

The Syrian president added that lately he has come to think that perhaps a different factor, like the EU, could fulfill a more central role in the negotiations. De Marco got the impression that al-Asad is being pressured by the normalization steps between Israel and the Gulf states, such as the visit Rabin paid to Oman, and that he regards it as an attempt to isolate Syria. Al-Asad said he will try to prevent his country's isolation.

It should be noted that the report from Malta adds to the list of reports on Syria's position which have arrived in Jerusalem in recent days from various capitals. All the reports say al-Asad believes that Rabin cannot make progress in the negotiations with Syria because of his political weakness. From the reports it appears that al-Asad is showing curiosity about Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu and about the chances that the Likud will make progress in the negotiations with Syria if it comes to power.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Viktor Posuvalyuk, who arrived in Israel Friday night after visiting Damascus, told Rabin that the Syrians feel sure of themselves and behave as if they had time. He said Syrian self-confidence grew after the Alexandria summit meeting last month. It attacked the Israeli claim that the quadripartite summit in Cairo on 2 February was a meeting of the "peace axis" while Syria is on the opposite axis. Posuvalyuk said the Syrians did not regard themselves as belonging to the camp opposing peace.

Another report reaching Jerusalem from Washington said that reports from the U.S. Embassy in Damascus say the Syrian elite is convinced that peace with Israel is unavoidable. "The Syrian business community is anxiously awaiting the time when it will become possible to implement the economic hopes it has pinned on the accord.

Syria Reportedly Blames Baraq for Talks' Failure

TA1202122295 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 12 Feb 95 p 2

[Report by Hemi Shalev]

[FBIS Translated Text] Syria accuses outgoing Chief of Staff Ehud Baraq of being responsible for the failure of the Washington military talks and for the stalemate in the negotiations between Israel and Syria.

Senior officials in Damascus told the European "troika" who visited Syria last week that due to Baraq's "political ambitions," the former chief of staff embraced tough and unacceptable positions in the officers talks held in Washington last December, thus bringing about the failure of the talks.

Israeli political sources say that the personal accusations leveled against Baraq have already appeared in the Syrian press, but that this is the first time Syrian Government officials have leveled such charges publicly. The sources confirmed that Baraq had indeed presented a tough position in the meeting with his Syrian counterpart Hikmat al-Shihabi, but added that he had not deviated from the mandate regarding the Israeli positions.

Cabinet Decides Not To Lift Closure Until End of Week

TA1202123995 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The closure on the territories will not be lifted at least until the end of this week. This was stated following today's cabinet meeting. Minister Yosi Sarid told our correspondent that the closure will not be lifted in the wake of reports of a possible terror attack in Israel during the week marking the anniversary of the Hebron massacre.

Our correspondent notes that in the cabinet meeting, Major General (reserve) Refa'el Vardi submitted a follow-up report on the security measures in the Cave of the Patriarchs. Gen. Vardi noted that there are law enforcement problems vis-a-vis the Jewish settlers.

Likud Leader on EU Troika Visit, Peace Process

BR1302131495 Paris LE FIGARO in French 11 Feb 95 p 3

[Interview with Likud Leader Binyamin Netanyahu by Claude Lorieux; place and date not given: " 'Arafat Has Not Lifted a Finger To Crush Terrorism"—first paragraph is LE FIGARO introduction]

[FBIS Translated Text] Binyamin Netanyahu, leader of Likud, is returning to Israel today after presiding over a dinner for 2,700 people organized by the "Herout de France" to collect funds for the Jewish settlements on the West Bank and in Gaza. The Israeli opposition leader, the great favorite in the opinion polls, met with Jacques Chirac [Paris mayor] and Charles Pasqua [French interior minister].

[Lorieux] What do you think of the mission which the European troika, chaired by [French Foreign Minister] Alain Juppe, is carrying out in the Near East?

[Netanyahu] There is no need for a mediator between the Arabs and us. What opposes us is not a territorial question. The real problem is that some Arab circles deny Israel's right to exist.

[Lorieux] Does this mean that the Europeans should make do with financing peace?

[Netanyahu] Europe should focus primarily on the countries which are sincerely moving toward peace. I am thinking of Jordan, Morocco, the Sultanate of Oman. Peace can be consolidated by investment, not only by donations.

[Lorieux] Are you saying to the Europeans: Help Jordan, but not Syria or the Palestinians?

[Netanyahu] To judge, Europe should use two criteria. Is the state involved motivated by a real desire for peace? Second, are the security arrangements drawn up between this country and Israel realistic enough for Israel to be able to defend itself if peace breaks down? Take Jordan. King Husayn has proved his desire for peace. But our forces are on the Jordan. They overlook the river from Samaria.

[Lorieux] What about Syria?

[Netanyahu] I have no doubt that President al-Asad sincerely desires to make peace with the United States. I very much doubt that he has the same intentions toward Israel. Damascus harbors 10 terrorist organizations.

[Lorieux] Al-Asad is offering peace in exchange for withdrawal from the Golan Heights...

[Netanyahu] Even if we gamble on the fact that al-Asad is a new al-Sadat, we will have to maintain our defenses on the Golan Heights. Just in case al-Asad should change his mind or be replaced as leader of the country.

[Lorieux] That leaves the PLO.

[Netanyahu] This organization does not meet either of our two criteria. 'Arafat wants to destroy Israel by stages. He has not lifted a finger to crush terrorism...

[Lorieux] He has arrested Islamic fundamentalists and, this week, members of Nayif Hawatmeh's Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine!

[Netanyahu] That is intended to impress people. He is giving the killers time to escape! Gaza is a sanctuary for terrorists.

[Lorieux] If you were prime minister, would you send Israeli commando groups into Gaza to root out the perpetrators of the terrorist outrages?

[Netanyahu] If I were prime minister, I would not reoccupy Gaza. But I would warn 'Arafat and the Islamic fundamentalists: "If you do not end the terrorism, we will end it."

[Lorieux] Do you envisage surrounding Gaza with fences and mines?

[Netanyahu] Fences will not stop terrorists. You have to dare to intervene beyond the barrier. They killed 130 Israelis in the 12 months which followed the Oslo agreement, compared with an average of 27 in the 5 years of the intifadah.

[Lorieux] By putting the lid firmly on Gaza, are you not running the risk of an explosion?

[Netanyahu] It is impossible to lock up the population of Gaza. The donor countries should carry out infrastructure projects directly, without working through the PLO. That would make it possible to create jobs.

[Lorieux] So you would allow the Arabs from Gaza to come and work in Israel?

[Netanyahu] Only if the Israelis' security does not suffer as a result.

[Lorieux] Do you reject 'Arafat as an interlocutor?

[Netanyahu] The Oslo agreement saved the PLO. It is reasonable to think that a more moderate PLO will emerge when Israel's policy has changed.

[Lorieux] Unless you inherit Hamas.

[Netanyahu] In Gaza, Hamas is gaining ground thanks to 'Arafat. In Judea-Samaria (the West Bank—LE FIGARO editor's note), we can take action. We are therefore monitoring Hamas.

[Lorieux] If you returned to power, would you refuse the extension to the West Bank of the autonomy for which the Oslo agreement makes provision?

[Netanyahu] We will respect the international agreements. But an agreement violated by the other side is no longer binding for the Israeli side. The government has already counted 300 violations of the Oslo agreements by the PLO. The majority of Israelis want this process to stop.

[Lorieux] Are you not afraid of an end to the normalization which has begun between Israel and many Arab states?

[Netanyahu] First, 'Arafat no longer represents much, other than in the eyes of some Western countries. Second, we will continue to negotiate. We want real autonomy for the West Bank, enabling the Palestinians to live with a minimum of interference on our part. But we do not want a Palestinian state. We do not want to turn the West Bank into a terrorist sanctuary.

Communique Details Issues Discussed at Cabinet Meeting

TA1202180595 Jerusalem GOVERNMENT PRESS OFFICE in English 12 Dec 94

["Cabinet Communique," issued by the Cabinet Secretariat]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] At the weekly Cabinet meeting today (Sunday), 12.02.95:

1. Within the framework of the Ministerial Committee on National Security, the Cabinet was briefed by security officials on ongoing security matters.

2. It was decided that the closure, at this stage, will continue.

3. The Prime Minister and the Cabinet expressed their deep appreciation to the Israel Police for their treatment of the abduction of members of the Gertler family.

4. The Cabinet received a detailed briefing, from Major-General (res.) Rafa'el Vardi, involving the implementation of recommendations made by the Commission of Inquiry that investigated the massacre at the Tomb of the Patriarchs (the Shamgar commission).

The Prime Minister and the Cabinet expressed their sincere thanks to security personnel for their skilled and efficient deployment in securing the Tomb of the Patriarchs. Gratitude was also expressed to Major-General (res.) Rafa'el Vardi for monitoring the implementation of recommendations made by the Commission of Inquiry (the Shamgar commission), and for his assistance to the defense establishment on other important matters.

5. The Prime Minister briefed the Cabinet on his meeting with Palestinian Authority head Yasir 'Arafat, on 9.2.95.

6. In accordance with the request of the Prime Minister, discussion of the appeal submitted by Meretz Cabinet members—concerning the decisions of the special ministerial committee on construction in Ma'ale Adumim, Betar, Givat Ze'ev and the Jordan valley—has been postponed until next Sunday.

7. The Cabinet approved the appointment of Dr. Me'ir Oren as Director-General of the Health Ministry.

8. The Cabinet approved the appointment of Shay Talmon as Chief Accountant of the Finance Ministry, and of Attorney Tamar Ben-David as Director of the Government Companies Authority.

Article Examines Growing Islamic Movement

TA1102193995 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV (SHABAT supplement) in Hebrew 10 Feb 95 pp 18, 19, 21

[Article by Sara Friedman and Amir Gilat: "Hamas' Next Stop—The Knesset"]

[FBIS Translated Text] About six months ago—last August—the Islamic Movement started a mass rally in Kafr Kanna in the Galilee. Shouting "Jerusalem First" and applauding the stirring speeches, over 15,000 people marched at a rally which became an impressive demonstration of the movement's power. During the gathering, the thousands of participants received stickers, information leaflets, and a contrived picture of Temple Mount showing the Third Temple on top.

In the closing speech, the members of the Islamic Movement called on all Palestinians to unite under the slogan "Jerusalem First" while stressing: "Arab Muslim Jerusalem is the eternal capital of the State of Palestine." They declared that all reputable Islamic and nationalist movements must make Jerusalem the focus of the struggle and demand an Arab Islamic summit at the Ka'ba in Mecca "in order to sign a convention of honor which will state that the peace accords will not succeed as long as Arab Muslim Jerusalem is not the eternal capital of Palestine."

If the members of the Islamic Movement stutter on other issues, they present their firm and uncompromising position on Jerusalem in the clearest way possible. "We swear by Allah that we will not give up Jerusalem," Shaykh 'Abdallah Nimr Darwish, the movement's leader, told a gathering for the hijzi new year held several months earlier in al-Tayyibah in the Triangle. Jerusalem is currently the focus of the Islamic Movement's activity. Pictures of Temple Mount hang in kindergartens, schools and colleges. In recent years, there have been growing numbers of Israeli Arabs at Friday prayers in the al- Aqsa Mosque. The phenomenon is especially striking during the closure and is a direct outcome of the movement's activities and sermons on Jerusalem by their leaders.

At the Kafr Kanna rally, the al-Nur group from Umm al-Fahm, which is identified with the Islamic Movement, recorded a new song called "Jerusalem First." The song refers to the suffering of their people and their longing for the Islamic dawn. Some of the group's songs will not sound so sweet to Israeli ears. An article on the recording, published in the November 1993 SAWT AL-HAQQ WA AL- HURRIYAH, the movement's bulletin, said: "The al-Nur group returns us to the alleyways of 'Akko, the oranges of Yafo, and Haifa's square with horses and carriages.... The songs were collected in order to create an inviolable document at a time when treachery has become a position and the land and the homeland have become goods put up for public auction.... Woe to the traitors in this world and in the next.... After the traitors have received the reward for their treachery they began to sell their culture to the highest bidder: they sold Haifa, Yafo, Lod, Ramallah, 'Umm al-Zaynat, Lajun, Geva', Husha, Barda, and Umm Rashrash. They sold everything for nothing: Our blood has been spilled and forsaken from Dayr Yasin to Janin."

Another group, al-I'tisam from Kafr Kanna has cut its seventh record with the motto: "Jerusalem is the apple of our eye, we will die but not give it up." Among the song titles on the record are: "Forward, My Homeland," "The Walls of Jerusalem," "He robbed My Land," and "The al-Aqsa Casualties—We Are the Defenders of the Legacy."

Beni Shilo, head of the Minorities Department in the Prime Minister's Office says: "The Islamic Movement worries me because it does not include lovers of Zion in its ranks, but we must stress that the movement has not broken the law. As long as it does not do that, it is difficult to deal with. We have a problem because we want to keep the Jewish character of the country and make sure that weeds do not spring up and try to overpower us, but at the same time and with the same desire, we wish to defend democracy, and the two are not always compatible.

The leaders of the Islamic Movement, some of whom have already served jail terms for setting up a radical Muslim movement within the Green Line, have learned their lesson and are now very careful not to break the law, but sometimes they come close to the red line. The most visible expression of that is found in SAWT AL-HAQQ WA AL-HURRIYAH, its official bulletin. We can determine their "dual game" merely through the name of the paper, published in Umm al-Fahm. Re'uven Paz of Haifa University, who specializes in this field, says that the name is taken from the slogan of the Muslim Brotherhood "Sawt al-Haqq al-Quwwa al-Hurriyah" ("The Voice of Justice, Power, and Freedom"). The members of the movement in Israel stress at each opportunity that they are not part of the Muslim Brotherhood, but they were quick to adopt the slogan as the title of their publication, while disposing—apparently deliberately—of the word "power."

By the way, in 1990 the interior minister, at the request of the security forces, issued an order closing the bulletin. It was shut down for three months and later reopened. Paz claims that the newspaper, in which Muslims from the territories also write, presents a clear line supporting Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement].

From time to time, the bulletin publishes articles whose headlines read "Please Receive the al-Qassam Brigades." In December 1993, it wrote that the organization's "members are noted for their high mental state, which has been expressed lately through carrying out of actions utilizing the deaths of martyrs and booby-trapped cars. They believe that the deaths of martyrs brings new blood into the tree of faith.... Despite the operations by the Israeli army, dozens of new al-Qassams, who steal sleep from the occupiers, have cropped up.... The Israeli rulers know Hamas threats well.... They know that the al-Quds military school has had proven success."

The bulletin also published a weekly sermon by Shaykh Hamad Abu-Dabas, a leader of the Islamic Movement in the Negev, preaching acquiescence with fate and love of death as a factors that strengthen the Muslim in his mission. A quote: "That does not mean willingly committing suicide, but doing what is called for without being afraid of death, and if Allah has destined a person to die as a martyr that is an act of grace.... The Muslim does not haggle over his faith and if a disaster or harm has been prescribed for him, then that is the wish of Allah." (21 October 1994)

A different article appeared under the headline "The Nazi Beast and the Israeli Angel." It blamed Israel for exaggerating the extent of the Holocaust. "The Nazi beast disappeared about 50 years ago, but it is not allowed to die and be forgotten. It continues to live in hearts to motivate Jews to come to Palestine from far away places to found the Hebrew state in an Arab region," Wasaf al- Shibani wrote. "On television we saw Israeli soldiers shoving children and firing at people in Gaza and on the West Bank, as well as demolishing houses with missiles, using the excuse that they are searching for wanted men. Did the Nazi beast use missiles against Jews? Did it destroy their homes? Did it poke out the eyes of their children and tear their young and innocent bodies to pieces with bullets?"

A security source admits: "We have a problem. It is very difficult to prove in a courtroom that such publications are breaking the law. The members of the Islamic Movement are sophisticated and are well aware of their limits.

They are careful and do not exceed them, thereby creating a serious problem for us."

Walking the cautious line between what is permitted and what is banned, bookshops have opened in areas where Islamic Movement activities are experienced. They sell books identified with the Muslim Brotherhood. The shops constitute a source of income for the movement and belong to registered associations. The Aid Committee, which deals with the transfer of funds to "orphans and Muslim widows in the territories," is registered and operates within the law. The Islamic religion recognizes the importance of charity and within that framework hundreds of thousands of shekels are transferred from the Arab villages within the Green Line to Islamic elements in the territories, and everything is done within the law as humanitarian aid.

A business venture was recently set up in the territories with the name "Bayt al-Mal" (The Finance House) whose real activities are now being investigated. The firm, which is identified with Islamic elements on the West Bank, has several branches in the territories. Therefore it was surprising to find among its shareholders Sulayman Agbariyah, the Umm al-Fahm deputy mayor, an Islamic Movement activist.

Agbariyah, who is also responsible for the movement's aid committee and appears to be the main economic channel between the Green Line and the territories, says: "It is an economic firm set up according to shari'ah (Islamic law) which forbids lending money for interest. The firm deals with trade and I am a partner. I bought shares and everything is above board. The company is registered and has a permit from the Civil Administration."

Legally, it is also the active arm of the Islamic Movement which looks after old Muslim cemeteries and the grave of 'Izz-al-Din al- Qassam near the township of Nesher, which has become a site for pilgrimages. Al-Qassam, after whom Hamas terrorist squads are named, was a nationalist-religious leader who was killed in 1935 in a battle with the British and became a national hero.

Beni Shilo of the Prime Minister's Office: "If we do not attend to the Muslim cemeteries, the Islamic Movement will do it. They will also find other areas in which to be active, but we should not give them excuses."

Other examples: In recent years, the police raided pirate cable television stations in the Arab sector. The Islamic Movement was apparently behind some of these stations and used to broadcast various programs on them. In some locations, Muslim elements take over the mosques as a show of force. Residents of Haifa's Halisa neighborhood find it hard to fall asleep because of the volume of the preacher's sermon in the nearby mosque. 'Ali Shibli, the local council head, had an even worse experience: "They seized control of the loudspeakers and declared a general strike and the suspension of school studies. We were forced to issue a municipal bylaw forbidding the use of the loudspeakers and the passing out of leaflets."

There are those who claim that the "dual game" of the movement's leaders is also expressed in the different way they speak in Hebrew and Arabic. By the way, for a long time, Umm al-Fahm Mayor Riyad Salah has said he does not know Hebrew and insists on being interviewed in Arabic. In time he suddenly learned Hebrew and now also agrees to be interviewed in Hebrew. Beni Shilo: "What worries me about Shaykh 'Abdallah, the movement's leader, is that when he talks to a Jewish public he avoids extremism. In Hebrew they are more cautious. Things do not always look the same in Arabic."

In that context, it is worthwhile quoting the remarks by Shaykh Ahmad 'Itzi [name as transliterated] of Kafr Bara, who said in an article in AL-SAWT last September: "There is no ban on adopting a policy of survival. If the enemy constitutes a danger and a threat to Islamic preaching, a display of loyalty to the enemy is legitimate under our religion, especially if we fear for our lives. It is best to take care against the enemies and show respect outwardly but not in the heart."

The first part of the investigation into the Islamic Movement shocked many in the Jewish and Arab sectors. Tzomet Knesset Member [MK] Eli'ezer Sandberg presented an urgent agenda motion on the issue. The Islamic Movement's leaders sidestepped responsibility for the publications and stressed that they were operating under the law. Ibrahim Nimr Husayn, chairman of the Supreme Arab Follow-up Committee, called for the establishment of an inquiry committee into the issue in the East Jerusalem newspaper AL-QUDS.

After the article was published, Shaykh 'Abdallah Nimr Darwish tossed out a trial balloon and announced that his movement had decided in principle to run in the next Knesset elections. After Ramadan, the first referendum of its kind among Islamic Movement supporters will decide if it will be done through an independent list or as part of a joint list. Darwish's declaration, even if it did not come as a surprise, sparked various reactions. Arab public figures welcomed the move, while the right wing, like Tzomet MK Moshe Peled, called for legislation to prevent the Islamic Movement from joining the Knesset.

Re'uven Paz believes that the Islamic Movement, which denies any ties to the Muslim Brotherhood, often participates in gatherings of Islamic elements in Europe and the United States. In these conferences the policy of the Muslim Brotherhood is formulated and within that framework the Israeli movement recently received a religious edict that Muslims are permitted to be elected to a secular parliament if it is done "for the good of the community." This lifted the ideological obstacle from the movement on its way to the Israeli legislature. This position is supported by the movement's leaders in the southern part of the Triangle, headed by Shaykh Darwish himself, as well as Ibrahim Sursur of Kafr Qasim, Kamal Riyan of Kafr Bara, and Jum'a Qasasi of Rahat in the Negev. Facing them are "the northerners" headed by Shaykh Kamal Khatib of Kafr Kanna who oppose joining the "Zionist parliament." Shaykh Riyad Zalah of Umm al-Fahm, who previously opposed the idea, no longer rejects it out of hand.

Dr. Eli Rekhes, of Tel Aviv University's Dayan Center, stressed the Islamic Movement's potential to cause a revolution in Arab politics in Israel. After resolving the religious problem, the movement still has to deal with the practical problem: Will it pay them to run for the Knesset or will it harm their power? Does recognition of the Israeli legislature and swearing loyalty to the state pay or is it preferable to focus on strong activity in the local authorities?

Dr. Rekhes points to similarities between today's Islamic Movement and RAKAH [New Communist Party] in the past. Some of the movement's leaders were previously members of the communist party, which does not come as a surprise. "Both movements believe in one absolute truth, with enormous stress put on the organizational aspect, in which both excel. Second, both recognize Israeli Arabs' political pluralism and deal with it through activity in the framework of a front. Just as RAKAH set up HADASH [Democratic Front for Peace and Equality] with the knowledge that it would not be able to draw all Israeli Arabs into the ranks of the communist party, the Islamic Movement now talks about "tahaluf" (union), which will enable the various elements and streams to join its ranks.

Dr. Rekhes sums up: "It is difficult to assess at this moment what path the movement will take if it decides to stand for election in the Knesset. At the moment, the movement does not have any reason to rush to decide and it seems that this decision will indirectly also be influenced by what happens to political Islam in the territories and perhaps also in other places, like Algiers. The decision by the Islamic stream in the territories on whether to stand for election there will definitely also have an impact on the Islamic Movement in Israel."

If the movement decides to compete in the elections, there is almost no doubt that in the next Knesset there will be members of the Islamic Movement. Even when they swear loyalty to the state and the flag, they will do it their way, but according to the law.

Minister on Taba Talks, Ties With Israel, Arabs

JN1102112495 Amman AL-ASWAQ in Arabic 11 Feb 95 pp 1, 13

[Report by 'Umar Kallab]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In an interview with AL-ASWAQ yesterday, Minister of Industry and Trade 'Ali Abu-al-Raghib emphasized that the five-way meeting in Taba last week tackled positive issues, despite Jordanian and Egyptian reservations about some of the points that were discussed. It was agreed with the Israeli side to reconsider positions on these points. [passage omitted]

Answering a question on the U.S. demand to reconsider the custom tariffs on cars, Abu-al-Raghib said this demand has nothing to do with customs. It was remarked that the link between custom tariffs and am auto engine's capacity is wrong, because scientific advancement means an engine's capacity is unrelated to the consumption of fuel. The Americans think this is a bias against U.S. cars. He said: We will not reduce customs on cars because we did so two months ago, but we will study these proposals.

On the subject of intellectual property rights, which was tackled at the Taba meeting and which obstructs investments in Jordan, as the Americans say, Abu-al-Raghib said: We in Jordan deal well with the subject of intellectual property rights. We are restudying it in a manner that serves the investment atmosphere. This subject has become a crucial international issue in light of modern trade concepts.

Asked if economic relations with Israel will obstruct Jordanian relations with Arab countries and about the seriousness of relations with Israel in light of the stumbling on the other Arab tracks, Abu-al-Raghib said: We should restore our relations with the Arab brothers. The government is making efforts toward this objective, but we are mainly concerned with our southern and western fronts. This means that the West Bank and Gaza have a special status in Jordan. This special status should take a commercial form.

He added: We believe there will not be a comprehensive peace that is positively reflected in the economic situation without progress on other Arab tracks. There are political tracks that cannot be ignored; we want political and economic achievements.

On the economic agreement with Israel, Abu-al-Raghib said it is expected to be signed on 19 May, but this depends on negotiations and their developments, and the realization of positive results on our national level. If we do not reach satisfactory results, the agreement with Israel will not be signed.

Foreign Minister on NPT, Syrian Peace Stand

NC1202070295 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2205 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 11 Feb (MENA)—Jordan's Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti stated his country's support for Egypt's position on the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT], a stance that demands Israel sign the Treaty.

In an interview with the opposition paper AL-WAFD to be published on 12 February, al-Kabariti said the issue should be raised at the next meeting of the Arab League Council, adding that Jordan wants a united stance on it.

Al-Kabariti said that the Washington meeting tomorrow, including Jordan, Egypt, Israel, Palestine, and the United States, is an extension of the four-way summit held recently in Cairo in an attempt to advance the peace process, which has almost stopped after reaching a critical point.

He expressed his belief that the Taba economic meeting of Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, Israel, and the United States was an important one because economy must go hand in hand with the peace process so that the Arab citizen can feel that the international community really backs peace, not just Israel.

The Jordanian foreign minister said his country supports the Syrian stance and the legitimate principles it is based on to retrieve all its territory, stressing that Jordan's stance on Syria is firm and unchangeable.

Prime Minister Receives Palestinian Official

JN1102215895 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency Prime Minister al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir received at the Prime Ministry tonight Salim al-Za'nun, acting speaker of the Palestine National Council [PNC].

They discussed a number of issues which fall within the framework of the distinguished fraternal relations between the sisterly Jordanian and Palestinian peoples, particularly in the parliamentary field. They also discussed developments of the peace process.

At the outset of the meeting, al-Za'nun extended his congratulations on the return of the entire Jordanian territories to Jordanian sovereignty. He lauded the unlimited support which Jordan under His Majesty King Husayn has extended, and is still extending, to the Palestinian people in order to help them realize their national rights.

During the meeting, the prime minister stressed Jordan's support for the Palestinian brothers, so they can exercise their legitimate national rights on their entire national soil.

Following the meeting, al-Za'nun made the following statement to our correspondent for political affairs:

[Begin recording] [al-Za'nun] The visit basically aimed to congratulate His Excellency al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir on his assumption of the premiership. However, a more important event took place; namely, Jordan's regaining of its entire territories and water rights. Therefore, we conveyed congratulations from all PNC members to his excellency.

We also discussed the importance of the relationship between Palestine and Jordan in the coming phase, especially since the Palestinian track is facing a big impasse. His excellency and also His Majesty King Husayn played a great role in rendering the Cairo meeting a success.

We also hope that a joint Jordanian-Palestinian effort will be made to reopen this negotiating track through the meeting which will be held in Washington under the sponsorship of President Clinton.

[Jordan TV correspondent Kassab Samawi] In light of the recent agreements signed by Jordan and the Palestinian National Authority, what is your opinion about the future Jordanian- Palestinian relationship and bilateral cooperation?

[Al-Za'nun] The Jordanian-Palestinian relationship is a strategic one. The River [Jordan] unites the two countries and cannot separate them in any way whatsoever. The agreements signed under the sponsorship of His Majesty King Husayn and President Yasir 'Arafat laid the cornerstone for continued good and constructive relations on the long path which is ahead of us all. [end recording]

Prime Minister Receives European Delegation

JN1102180295 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency Prime Minister al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir received in his office at noon today an EU troika delegation led by Denis Bouchard [name as transliterated], the executive director of the Middle East and North Africa Section at the French Foreign Ministry.

During the meeting, they discussed Jordanian-EU relations in various fields with particular emphasis on the economic field and the projects which are being implemented or which are being studied with the EU, which will enhance the opportunities for serious and fruitful cooperation in the coming phase.

Moreover, they discussed the peace process and ways to continue it in order to reach a lasting, just, and comprehensive peace. They also reviewed issues related to the Barcelona conference, slated for the end of November. This conference will be attended by delegates from the Mediterranean and European Community states.

The prime minister stressed Jordan's concern about consolidating the peace process in order to achieve a comprehensive and just peace. Such peace will guarantee future opportunities for a secure decent life for the regional peoples. He also reviewed Jordan's continued efforts to promote the regional peace process as well as Jordan's concern about enhancing its march under the realities of the new phase in which Jordan regained both sovereignty over all its territories and its water rights.

His excellency also expressed Jordan's appreciation for the EU's role and efforts to support the peace process, particularly in the economic field, which enhanced the opportunities for pushing the region toward a state of prosperity that is in harmony with the aspirations of the regional peoples following their concern and suffering.

The delegation's head reviewed the outcome of the troika delegation's visit to the region as well as the EU's efforts to support the peace process and its concern about fostering cooperation with Jordan on the bilateral and regional levels. He also appreciated Jordan's efforts to achieve peace as well as its regional role and participation in defining the features of the coming phase.

The meeting was attended by Dr. Khalid al-Karaki, deputy prime minister, information minister, and acting foreign minister.

In a statement to reporters following the meeting, Bouchard said the European troika's recent tour of the region aims to promote the peace efforts and convince the parties concerned, particularly the Palestinians and Israel, of the need to continue the efforts designed to achieve peace as there is no other alternative in the region.

He expressed the EU's readiness to enhance cooperation relations with Jordan in various fields and sign agreements in this regard. He also asserted that the Amman economic conference, slated for October, will be another opportunity to enhance EU-Jordanian relations because the EU will play a prominent role to render this conference a success.

Moreover, Bouchard noted that during the meeting with his excellency the prime minister Jordan was invited to attend the Barcelona conference for the Mediterranean and European states which will be held in Spain in November. This conference will address political, economic, security, and humanitarian issues in a comprehensive manner in order to initiate a political dialogue designed to attain tangible results and begin a new cooperation program for supporting the economic development efforts of the Mediterranean states.

Minister Blacklists Vessels Dealing With Israel

JN1302110395 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 13 Feb 95 p 32

[FBIS Translated Text] In accordance with the provisions of the uniform law on the boycott of Israel and in implementation of the provisions and principles of the boycott, Jordanian Finance Minister Basil Jardanah has decided to blacklist the Bahamian vessel (Valencia Briog) and Russian vessel (Jomil-1) and to ban dealing with them.

Jardanah has also decided to lift the boycott imposed on dealing with a number of Liberian, Swiss, British, Bulgarian, and Indian ships. He also cleared Bahamian, Greek, Liberian, Croatian, and Philippine ships from the blacklist and blacklisted an Estonian and an Ukrainian vessel.

Opposition Urges End to Government 'Harassment'

NC1202141695 Paris AFP in English 1314 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman, Feb 12 (AFP)—Jordan's opposition including the fundamentalist Islamic Action Front on Sunday [12 January] demanded an end to government "harassment" of groups hostile to the country's peace treaty with Israel.

The 11 Islamic, left-wing and Arab nationalist groups held a joint press conference here to warn of "restrictions of democratic freedom" and to present a list of six demands to the government.

They urged the authorities to cancel trials of opposition leaders and journalists accused of involvement with an unauthorised committee fighting against normalisation with Israel.

They also demanded an end to the interrogation of Bahjat Abu-Gharbiyah, the head of the committee which groups the 11 opposition parties, and to the "harassment" of its activists.

The opposition should have the right to put its case in the government press and visit "political prisoners," they said, also calling for the lifting of a preaching ban on clerics opposed to the Arab-Israeli peace process.

Ishaq al-Farhan, head of the Islamic Action Front, said "the opposition believes the current government has increased pressure" on it "despite its commitment to consolidate democracy."

Opposition groups respected the law and the constitution of Jordan and were "against resorting to violence."

Al-Farhan also announced a "popular congress against normalisation with Israel" would take place in coming months.

Opposition groups, which hold 17 seats out of 80 seats in parliament, have repeatedly condemned the Jordan-Israel peace treaty signed on October 26.

They organised street protests against the opening of the Israeli embassy in Amman on December 11.

SAWT AL-SHA'B To Suspend Publication

JN1302100595 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 13 Feb 95 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] The Board of Directors of the Dar al- Sha'b Company has decided to suspend publication of the newspaper SAWT AL-SHA'B as of tomorrow, Tuesday, and until further notice. The decision, made at a session held yesterday, 12 February 1995, aims at reorganizing and rectifying the company's position.

The Board of Directors presented the following recapitalization plan:

1. Lowering the company's capital from 2 million dinars to half a million.
2. Increasing capital by 2.7 million dinars in a special subscription to stock so that capital will become 3.2 million dinars.

Hizballah Head: NATO Statements 'Declaration of War'

NC1102091395 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Hizballah Secretary General Hasan Nasrallah has said: We have heard statements by various circles and NATO in the past few days to the effect that this alliance is making Islamic fundamentalism its new enemy following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the socialist bloc.

Speaking at a ceremony in the Burj al-Barajinah Mosque held by Hizballah to mark the 40th day of the death of leader Muhammad Talabah, Nasrallah said that this is a declaration of war on Islamic fundamentalism by the alliance and its master, the United States. He noted that His Eminence leader Khamene'i drew attention to this several months ago, adding that this alliance would not survive if there were no common enemy to bring the alliance countries together.

The Hizballah secretary general went on to say: NATO has started to realize that Islam has become our nation's option. Therein lies the danger, because their problem is with Islam and the Koran. He added that Israel is no more than a frontline U.S.-NATO base in the heart of the Islamic world.

He said that the issue is not one of secure borders, as [Israeli coordinator of Lebanese affairs] Lubrani said, or a question of geography, but a question of the role assumed by Israel, namely to strike, stab, and enslave the Muslim nation for the benefit of the West and arrogance.

He added: Things have started to become clear. This statement means that we are reaching the final stages of liquidation. Nasrallah concluded by saying: We have to choose which camp we must join. If the others want to wage war against us, then the nation has the right to defend itself and resist humiliation and degradation.

Hizballah Leaders: Threats Will Not Stop 'Resistance'

NC1302081395 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 13 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In a speech rally in al-Khansa' mosque in al-Ghubayrah [in Beirut] yesterday, Hizballah marked the anniversaries of the Islamic revolution in Iran and the martyrdom of al-Sayyid 'Abbas al-Musawi and Shaykh Raghib Harb [former Hizballah leaders]. The speech rally was attended by national, Islamic, and Palestinian figures and activists. Speakers valued the sacrifices of martyrs and stressed continued resistance and adherence to the line of the Islamic revolution.

Hizballah Secretary General al-Sayyid Hasan Nasrallah said the mujahidin launched their jihad not at the orders of Iran or Syria, but at the orders of their dignity, pride, and Islam. He stressed on behalf of the mujahidin in Lebanon and Palestine that resistance will continue. We will march together until the end of the road against the arrogant ones, he said. Nasrallah said the blood of 'Abbas al-Musawi, the master of the Islamic Resistance martyrs, and his family stressed this option three years ago. He said: The United States can do anything in its power, but it cannot remove our faith, commitment, and spirit. It will not frighten us by any measure it takes. [passage omitted]

Meanwhile, Hizballah Deputy Secretary General Shaykh Na'im Qasim has asserted that the Islamic Resistance will proceed with its operations against the occupation forces despite the Zionist threats. He said these threats demonstrate the enemy's anxiety as a result of resistance operations.

In a celebration in Suhmur to mark the 16th anniversary of the Islamic revolution, Shaykh Qasim said Israel threatened the resistance, Lebanon, and Syria. The increasing amount of these threats, he said, reveal the weakness of Israeli plans designed to dispel the Zionist worry caused by resistance operations. He said: We will not stop resistance, we are not worried, and we are reassured about our situation and future. We will continue to deal blows until we liberate the land and obstruct the Zionist-American plan. We are the owners of the land, and we will not abandon a single inch of it.

Palestinians Wound Security Agents in Shoot-Out

NC1002220295 Paris AFP in English 2055 GMT 10 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sidon, Lebanon, Feb 10 (AFP)—Two military intelligence service agents were wounded late Friday [10 February] in a gun battle with militant Palestinians trying to stop the arrest of one of their members, police said.

The shoot-out erupted as the agents tried to arrest Bilal Shraydi at his home in al-Ta'mir, next to the entrance to the Palestinian camp at 'Ayn al-Hulwah.

Shraydi managed to escape as the intelligence men came under machine-gun fire, police added without saying what charges Shraydi faced.

The Lebanese army was put on alert and boosted security around the camp on the outskirts of Sidon, the main town in southern Lebanon.

Palestinian sources said the People's Committee, an umbrella group of political formations in 'Ayn al-Hulwah had begun a search to find Shraydi and his supporters to hand them over to the Lebanese security services.

Shraydi is a supporter of Shaykh Hisham Shraydi, former head of a Muslim Sunni radical cell who was killed several years ago during clashes with PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat's main Fatah faction.

Fatah is the dominant faction in the Lebanese camps.

The fundamentalists have won growing popular support in 80,000- strong 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp in the past three years, but have so far failed to muscle in on the powers-that-be in the camp.

Leader of Radical Palestinian Group Arrested

NC1102140595 Paris AFP in English 1137 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sidon, Lebanon, Feb 11 (AFP)—Lebanese authorities have arrested a leader of the radical Palestinian group, the Fatah Revolutionary Council, who is accused of involvement in a boat hijacking, security services said Saturday [11 February].

Mahmud Khalid 'Aynatur, 48, head of "special operations" with the group headed by Abu-Nidal, was arrested in recent days in south Lebanon's main town of Sidon.

'Aynatur, whose nom de guerre is Abu-'Ali Majid, is accused of involvement in the hijacking of a yacht on the Mediterranean in 1987. The Silco's seven Belgian passengers were taken hostage.

The hostages were released in stages between 1988 and 1991 after the intervention of Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi.

'Aynatur is also expected to be questioned about the murder of a Jordanian diplomat in Beirut on January 29, 1994. Six FRC members received sentences of up to life imprisonment last October for their part in the murder.

The Lebanese army refused to confirm press reports that 'Aynatur was arrested by the army's intelligence service.

The FRC opposes PLO chairman Yasir 'Arafat and is widely condemned as a terrorist organisation. Its headquarters are unknown, but Abu-Nidal has been reported working out of Libya and Lebanon.

Its offices in Syria were officially closed down at the request of the United States.

The group claimed the assassinations of several Jordanian diplomats between 1983 and 1995, as well as the attempted murder of Israel's ambassador to London which prompted the Jewish state's invasion of Lebanon in 1982.

The FRC has also claimed responsibility for killing moderate Palestinian officials close to 'Arafat, including 'Isam Sartawi in Lisbon in 1983. Sartawi had contacts with anti-Zionist Jews and Israeli pacifists.

Justice Minister on U.S. Human Rights Report

NC1102203295 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 2000 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Justice Minister Bahij Tabbarah has stated that the U.S. State Department's report on human rights in Lebanon is a periodic report which is issued annually. He noted that the report contains misrepresentations [mughalatat] and called for not giving it more significance than it deserves.

Tabbarah explained that the Washington security meetings [between a U.S. and a Lebanese delegation] have cleared up many things. He noted that the U.S. delegation will ask its government to ease the pressure on Lebanon. [passage omitted]

Higher Syrian-Lebanese Council Holds Meeting

Lebanon's al-Hirawi Meets With al-Asad

JN1102172195 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi arrived in Damascus at 1545 today. He was received at Damascus western entrance by President Hafiz al-Asad. He was also received by Vice Presidents 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and Dr. Muhammad Zuhayr Mashariqah, People's Assembly Speaker 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah, Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi, Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', and Nasri al-Khuri, secretary general of the Syrian-Lebanese Higher Council. [passage omitted]

The two presidents held a meeting at Tishrin Palace. The meeting was attended for Syria by Vice Presidents 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and Dr. Muhammad Zuhayr Mashariqah; People's Assembly Speaker 'Abd-al- Qadir Qaddurah; Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi; Dr. Salim Yasin, deputy prime minister for economic affairs; and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'. For Lebanon, the meeting was attended by Nabih Birri, speaker of the chamber of deputies; Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri; Michel al-Murr, deputy prime minister and interior minister; and Nasri al-Khuri, secretary general of the Syrian-Lebanese Higher Council.

Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' was on hand to receive the visiting president at the Syrian-Lebanese borders and accompanied him to Damascus.

Presidents Co-Chair Meeting

JN1102204095 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1915 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Higher Syrian-Lebanese Council held a meeting at 1845 today under the co-chairmanship of President Hafiz al-Asad and Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi. The meeting was attended on the Syrian side by Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, People's Assembly Speaker 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah, Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi, and Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs Dr. Salim Yasin.

On the Lebanese side, it was attended by Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri, Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, and Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Michel al-Murr. Nasri al- Khuri, secretary general of the Higher Lebanese-Syrian Council also attended.

Bilateral Relations Discussed

JN1202061495 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0515 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Higher Syrian-Lebanese Council held a meeting at 1845 yesterday under the co-chairmanship of President Hafiz al-Asad and Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi. The meeting was attended on the Syrian side by Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, People's Assembly Speaker 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah, Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi, and Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs Salim Yasin.

On the Lebanese side, it was attended by Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri, Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, and Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Michel al-Murr. Nasri al- Khuri, secretary general of the Higher Lebanese-Syrian Council, also attended.

The council reviewed the fraternal relations between the two sisterly countries and underscored their various common denominators, stressing the importance of enhancing them out of the historic ties linking the two countries and out of their mutual interests.

President al-Hirawi and the members of the Lebanese side thanked Syria for the assistance it extended to Lebanon in order to restore its role and well-being. The council then discussed the topics listed on its agenda and adopted the appropriate decisions. It also listened to the annual report delivered by the council's general secretariat and approved the minutes of the follow-up and coordination committee meeting, as well as the council's logo and the 1995 budget. The council will resume meetings this morning, Sunday.

Decisions Adopted

JN1202154095 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Higher Syrian-Lebanese Council resumed its meetings at the al-Rawdah Palace at 1145 today under the co-chairmanship of President Hafiz al-Asad and President Ilyas al-Hirawi. The meeting was attended for the Syrian side by Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, People's Assembly Speaker 'Abd-al- Qadir Qaddurah, Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi, and Dr. Salim Yasin, deputy prime minister for economic affairs. For the Lebanese side, the meeting was attended by Nabih Birri, speaker of the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies; Prime Minister Rafiq a-Hariri; and Michel al-Murr, deputy prime minister and interior minister. The meeting was also attended by Nasri al-Khuri, secretary general of the Higher Syrian-Lebanese Council.

At its meeting today, the council resumed discussions of agenda topics and made the appropriate decisions. The decisions were signed by the co-chairmen of the Higher Council, Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Ilyas al-Hirawi. Those decisions approve the logo of the Higher Council and the minutes of the meeting of the follow-up commission held in Damascus on 19-20 September 1994. The decisions also specify the allocations for the council's general budget for 1995, endorse the currency of the final account of the 1994 budget, and authorize the council secretary general to conclude a contract with a legal auditor to audit the accounts of the general secretariat.

During the meeting, Presidents al-Asad and al-Hirawi underlined the need to activate the work of departments and institutions in the two sisterly countries to achieve the objectives of the Brotherhood and Coordination Treaty, further cement the relations of brotherhood and cooperation between the two countries, and achieve their joint objectives.

The Higher Council's meeting was followed by a closed meeting between President Hafiz al-Asad and President Ilyas al-Hirawi at the Rawdah Palace.

Press on Importance of Presidents' Talks

JN1202100595 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 12 Feb 95

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] Under the headline "The Lofty Edifice," the newspaper TISHRIN says that the meetings of the Higher Syrian-Lebanese Council held under the co-chairmanship of Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Ilyas al-Hirawi are meant to assess the accomplishments of the integration process between the two fraternal countries, discuss ways to promote joint cooperation, and review current developments, the chief among which is the cause of Middle East peace.

The paper adds: The integration process between the two countries is constantly promoted thanks to the two sides' strong desire to upgrade their ties of kinship and nurture their common destiny. It goes without saying that the future of the peace process is of concern to Syrian and Lebanese officials due to the obstructions facing this process, thanks to Israel's intransigence and its failure to comply with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, which provide for complete Israeli withdrawal from all of the Golan and southern Lebanon.

TISHRIN goes on to say: Syria and Lebanon want a just, comprehensive, and honorable peace in the region, one that would reverse Israeli aggression and dismantle the Israeli occupation of Arab territories in implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425. The two countries have rejected all separate and flawed deals. It is to be recalled that Lebanon has announced that its special fraternal ties with Syria will never be used as a bargaining chip, that the Lebanese and Syrian tracks of negotiations are inseparable, and that regional peace is impossible to achieve unless Israel effects complete withdrawal from the Golan and southern Lebanon.

TISHRIN concludes by saying: The meetings of the Higher Syrian- Lebanese Council and the results they will produce constitute a new brick to be added to the lofty edifice built by the two countries under Presidents al-Asad and al-Hirawi. This edifice is too strong to be penetrated by Israel.

The newspaper AL-THAWRAH addresses the same issue, saying: The Higher Syrian-Lebanese Council is meeting at a critical and delicate phase, particularly since the peace process has reached a serious dilemma, thanks to Israel's intransigent rejection of complete withdrawal from the Golan and southern Lebanon. The meetings of the council have come to crown the constant consultations, coordination, and cooperation between Syria and Lebanon against the background of the fraternal pan-Arab sentiments they harbor for each other. The current state of affairs requires an examination of the current regional and international political developments, as well as a discussion of issues related to the peace process. Syrian-Lebanese coordination has demonstrated its credibility at all the serious turning points experienced by the protracted peace process since the days preceding the convocation of the Madrid conference. Facts and developments have shown that this coordination, which has produced a common stand, is too strong to be undermined by Israel. This stand is invulnerable under all circumstances, particularly since the entire world community has realized that the Syrian and Lebanese tracks of negotiations are inseparable.

Concluding its commentary, AL-THAWRAH says: The results of the new meetings of the Higher Syrian-Lebanese Council will contribute toward promoting fraternal ties between Syria and Lebanon and translating them into practical moves in the political, economic, cultural, and all other areas. This will positively affect the future of bilateral cooperation and enhance common stands toward the challenges posed by the peace battle. This will not only benefit the two fraternal states, but the whole nation as well.

Lebanese President, Delegation Leave

JN1202172895 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi and his accompanying delegation left Damascus at 1515 today following a two-day visit to the Syrian Arab Republic. During the visit, the Lebanese president cochaired with President Hafiz al-Asad the meeting of the Higher Syrian-Lebanese Council. Leading those seeing him off at the Damascus western entrance was President Hafiz al-Asad. [passage omitted]

Envoy to U.S.: Damascus 'Indifferent' to Washington Meeting

JN1102181695 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 11 Feb 95

[Report by Hisham Milhim in Washington]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] In a statement to Radio Monte Carlo, the Syrian ambassador in Washington has said that Syria is indifferent [ghayr muktarithah] to the Blair House meeting. Ambassador Walid al-Mu'allim added that he informed Dennis Ross that these efforts should have been exerted not to set up such alliances, but to pave a fruitful and better road; namely, to move toward a comprehensive peace.

Paper Expects U.S. To 'Activate' Peace Process

JN1202091395 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 12 Feb 95

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] The newspaper AL-BA'TH addresses the U.S. position toward the peace process, saying: The U.S. Administration will make a fresh endeavor to activate the peace process and break the deadlock plaguing it, particularly since an exchange of views was conducted under its auspices on the Syrian-Israeli track of negotiations. It is to be recalled that this exchange of views confirmed Israel's intransigence, as well as the Rabin government's failure to change its stand, which is opposed to withdrawal from the occupied Golan and southern Lebanon.

AL-BA'TH adds: Since the conclusion of the Syrian-Israeli exchange of views conducted in Washington, Israel has been stepping up its anti-Syria charges in a bid to misrepresent facts and reverse the proper equation, which enjoys the support of the world community. A clear and unequivocal commitment to the initiative is required. There can be no compromises in this regard. As for Israel, it has failed to declare even a modicum of such commitment. On the contrary, it is holding on to the occupied territories and engaging in an open war on defenseless southern Lebanese villages on a daily basis.

Commentary: Coalition Meeting Meant To Delay Collapse

JN1202215895 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1917 GMT 12 GMT 12 Feb 95

[Commentary by Yusuf Maqdisi; from the "Behind the News" program]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] A summit was held in Alexandria on 29 January. The summit brought together Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Husni Mubarak and King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz. The purpose of the summit was to mend the Arab situation and preserve the Arab identity by enhancing the role of the Arab League. The summit was a serious move to stop the deterioration in Arab ranks and stop the collapse of the Arab situation in the face of the Israeli scheme of hegemony, whose roots were clear in the recent Casablanca summit.

This approach was then meant to bring about Arab awakening and defeat the Israeli schemes that seek to impose hegemony, since this hegemony found Arab channels to enable it to infiltrate. In view of this approach, Israel has mobilized its forces through what it called a coalition for peace. This coalition seeks to prevent Arab action from crystallizing in a strategy that is capable of containing the damage resulting from Israeli penetrations into the Arab arena and that is capable of preventing Israel from controlling the arteries of the Arab body, given that some of its parts have collapsed.

Rabin thought that announcing the setting up of this coalition was enough to enable the umbrella of this coalition to engulf the Arab nation and hide the deep contradictions behind a false Israeli peace that contravenes the resolutions of international legality under the pretext of meeting Israel's security demands. These demands depend on settlement expansion, fighting so-called terrorism, and giving Israel a free hand in nuclear armament and not subjecting it to the control of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Rabin is today dragging along his coalition to Washington to give it an injection to delay its collapse and to help him market it again. However, Rabin's calculations are mere illusions. This is because the roads of Oslo and al-'Aqabah will not provide for Israel the security it wants and the Middle East hegemony it is dreaming of. The Arab region is not in a state of loss and is not looking for an Israeli identity. [passage omitted]

Afghanistan

4,000 Golboddin Men Reportedly Defect to Government

LD1002164795 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 10 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Four thousand men attached to the Hezb-e Eslami of Golboddin have joined the Islamic Army.

Quoting the security forces of the country, the military correspondent of the Bakhtar Information Agency reported that these men brought with them 4,000 light and heavy weapons.

These forces have expressed their readiness to foil all conspiracies hatched against the Islamic State of Afghanistan.

Since these men came over, the areas of Istalef [word indistinct] and Kalakan are now enjoying a satisfactory calmness.

According to the security sources' report, a futile resistance by a number of adventurist men was foiled yesterday morning by the local forces and the noble people of Qarabagh. Security has now been restored in Qarabagh.

Militia Rockets Kill 15 People in Kabul City

LD1002182095 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 10 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kabul city again came under militia rocket attacks last night. Fifteen citizens of Kabul city, including nine members of one family, were killed and several others were injured.

Quoting a spokesman of Kabul garrison, a BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY correspondent reports that militiamen, sabotaging the United Nations' peace process, fired last night 10 rockets on residential areas, as a result of which 15 Kabul citizens were martyred. Nine members of a single family, including women and children living in the 9th ward of Kabul are among those innocent people who lost their lives.

As a result of the militia's rocket attacks, a number of our compatriots were injured and several houses were destroyed.

(?At a gathering) Kabul citizens have expressed their repulsion for the militiamen action and asked the Islamic state to exert pressure on the United Nations' peace delegation to accelerate their activities for implementing the United Nations' peace programs.

Taleban Group Reportedly Takes Over Lowgar Province

NC1202082995 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In Afghanistan the Taleban group has taken control of Lowgar Province in the east of the country. Our correspondent Khameneh reports from Islamabad:

[Begin Khameneh recording] According to a Taleban spokesman in Peshawar, Pakistan, the group's armed members have taken Pol-e 'Alam, the center of Lowgar Province, previously under the control of Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party], after occupying Meydanshahr, the center of Wardak Province.

Lowgar Province is near Chahar Asiab, the main base of the Hezb-e Eslami, and, according to the Taleban spokesman, many of Hekmatyar's forces have been pushed back toward Chahar Asiab. Independent Afghan forces have not confirmed this report and there have been no reports of Taleban claims being received by Hezb-e Eslami sources.

The Taleban spokesman reported that a session of his group's leaders will be convened in the southeast city of Ghazni to decide on group strategy and operations. In the past six months the Taleban group has achieved numerous victories in south Afghanistan and has at least seven provinces under its control. Earlier this group said it would advance toward Kabul.

A spokesman for President Borhanoddin Rabbani said: A government delegation will travel to Meydanshahr to hold talks with the Taleban leader regarding group programs. It is being stated that some Afghan groups have also sent their representatives to Meydanshahr for similar talks after it was occupied by the Taleban forces on Friday [10 February]. The Taleban group has not announced its participation in the plan to set up an interim council for the transfer of power in Kabul. But UN sources in Kabul state that this group supports the efforts of the special UN peace delegation. [end recording]

Emergence, Activities of Taleban Viewed

LD1202202095 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1105 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Reports from Kabul indicate that a group called Taleban has taken the control of a significant area in the Lowgar Province which has brought it closer to the Afghan capital.

This is the ninth province the Taleban group has captured so far. The majority of the Taleban group's members have studied in Pakistan's religious schools. The group enjoys the support of between 20,000 to 30,000 forces. The Taleban group's first appearance on the Afghan political arena was last Aban [month beginning

23 October 1994]. Since then, it has managed to take control of over 20 percent of Afghan territory.

Despite Taleban claims considering itself to be a group with a long history, opposing Afghan parties and factions are suspicious of the group. Comments made by a number of the leaders of Afghan parties and factions are indicative of the fact that they are also not quite sure about the exact nature of these seminary students. This situation has made the leaders of Afghanistan's political and military parties doubtful and they cannot ignore the seminary students' threatening advances or their popular slogans. That is why they have been very careful in their approach towards the Taleban group.

On the emergence of the Taleban group as a third force on Afghanistan's political scene, a number of the existing factions believe that foreign hands may be involved in the creation and strengthening of the group. Of course the Taleban group itself says that it neither supports any domestic group or faction, nor does it receives support from any foreign country. Despite that, their swift advances in various Afghan regions brings one question to mind: From which source do they obtain their financial requirements and advanced military equipment?

In any case, the Taleban group has so far managed to win a part of the Afghan public support through its slogans. The Taleban group considers the actions of the Afghan mojahedin in the last three years as un-Islamic and it intends to create a genuine Islamic government in Afghanistan. That is why the group has also announced that it only supports UN efforts, if such efforts lead to the establishment of a genuine Islamic government in Afghanistan. Until then they have said they will continue their uprising.

Food Convoys Enter Kabul

LD1302094995 Tehran IRNA in English 0853 GMT 13 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, Feb. 13, IRNA—Food convoys started pouring into Kabul from the eastern Vardak province that fell to Afghan theology sutdents, Taleban, last week, Afghan sources said here on Monday [13 February].

A convoy of 50 trucks carrying cooking oil and other foodstuff reached Kabul the other day and was distributed among people of war-weary Kabul that had been besieged by forces of Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] led by Golboddin Hekmatyar blocking all food traffic to Afghan capital.

The sources told IRNA that the convoy, order [word indistinct] Afghan businessmen left southwestern Pakistani town of Quetta on Saturday [11 February] and reached Kabul via Kandhar, Zabul and Vardak provinces controlled by theology students of Taleban.

Taleban force maps up of religious students turned fighters had been (?unheard) of until six months ago when they captured Kandhar province in July last.

The formidable Taleban force flushed out forces of Hezb-e Eslami from Vardak last week and most of the Logar province on Satuday and now intend to advance on Charasiab, Hekmatyar's headquarter or Kabul run by President Borhanoddin Rabbani.

Hekmatyar denied earlier claims of Taleban that they had captured entire Logar province, considered as stronghold of his Hezb-e Eslami.

Hekmatyar in an interview in Logar considered Taleban as a threat to United Nations peace efforts for resolving the lingering Afghan crisis.

United Nations Special Mission on Afghanistan led by Ambassador Mehmud Mestiri on Saturday announced that the interim set-up would be ready within next ten days.

Cease-Fire Agreed; Transitional Council in Place 20 Feb

LD1102163395 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The warring sides in Afghanistan have agreed to a cease-fire, to permit the transfer of power to a transitional council. Mestiri, the UN secretary general's special envoy, announced that the council, which comprises representatives of large sections of the people of Afghanistan, will take charge on 20 February. Under the agreement, a general cease-fire will also be established throughout Afghanistan.

Rabbani Blames 'Foreign Interference' for Fighting

LD1202204695 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The press office of the presidency of the Islamic State of Afghanistan [ISA] reported to the BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY that esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani, president of the ISA, received this morning a correspondent of the (Ninth Channel) newspaper of Japan [name indistinct] and answered his questions. In response to one question the president of our country said: The ISA wants all out peace and stability in the country and has always made efforts in this respect. The president of our country added: As experience has shown, in the course of the last two years it has become clear that foreign interference is the only cause of the fighting in Afghanistan. If the interference ceases, peace and security will definitely be ensured in our country and an end will be put to the fighting. Mr. President added as the leader of the ISA, he continues his efforts in one voice with his people for the realization of peace and takes quick steps in this respect.

Foreign Ministry Answers U.S. Report on Human Rights

LD1202205095 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 1600 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Afghan Foreign Ministry remarks on a [words indistinct] report of the U.S. State Department.

On 1 January of the current Christian year the State Department (?published) its annual report on the (?human rights) situation in Afghanistan. [words indistinct] Unfortunately, in this report all sides have been accused equally of the violation of human rights without taking into account the structures and realities of [words indistinct] and making a differentiation between the forces that believe in human rights and related standards, and the professional criminals linked to foreign circles, which are the main reason for all the tension and violation of [word indistinct] of legality and are the cause of illegality in parts of the country.

In our view such an assessment raises questions. The people of the world know that as a result of the blatant aggression by the former Soviet Union, Afghanistan endured a prolonged and painful war, and this destructive war inflicted irreparable damage on [word indistinct] of the people of Afghanistan. With the victory of the Islamic Revolution and the righteous jihad of the people, known and extremist groups mounted vain and futile assaults, which caused the death of the ordinary and defenseless people of Afghanistan, especially the residents of the city of Kabul.

The 1 January 1994 coup d'etat and its organizer—the so-called Coordination Council—caused much loss of life and material damage. The criminal perpetrators of the coup d'etat terrifyingly destroyed residences, mosques, hospitals, schools, and public utility installations by rockets and heavy weapons fire. They closed communication roads to Kabul and put the needy people of Kabul under economic siege and forced them to take refuge in other places. It is obvious that after every revolutionary and fundamental change, chaos, law breaking, theft, and lack of discipline basically occur in every society, and the violation of the principles of human rights take place.

Right from the outset of the victory of the Islamic revolution, Afghanistan, with full awareness and purposful confidence has constantly made all-out efforts to rein all forces and the anti- legality and security terrorist elements and circles in order to safeguard human rights—and cordial efforts still continue in this respect.

While it considers the (?logical) need for the scrupulous assessment by a detailed report, such as that of the U.S. State Department on the circumstances of human rights in Afghanistan, with full respect the Afghan Foreign Ministry draws the attention of the U.S. State Department authorities in the said report to the following points: The extent of exaggeration is apparent on many matters, i.e. the incidents and events in Afghanistan have not been reflected as they should have been, and generally in many instances the presentation of information seems exaggerated. The more than necessary details of sexual [word indistinct] by the presenters of the report, generally, and the rape of a 15 year-old girl and the murder of her father especially, are among them.

Contrary to the expectation of the people and the Islamic State of Afghanistan, many clear facts and realities, which cannot be denied by anyone, have been shown inverted in the report circulated by the U.S. State Department. For example, the murder of Mirwais Jalil, the local BBC reporter, who by the testimony of an Italian journalist has been killed in the area controlled by the opponents [words indistinct] has been blatantly covered up. Similarly, the accusation of the detention of Zia Nasri, who wanted to enter the country illegally in circumstances that there is a congestion of armed militia, both responsible and irresponsible, by the Islamic army forces, regardless of the fact that the diplomatic missions of the country knew nothing about the issue of a visa to him, cannot be justified. In the U.S. State Department report, attention is mainly focused on the negative points of the human rights issues regardless of the political and military complexity of the country, and the positive achievements of the Islamic State of Afghanistan in this respect have been ignored.

With full responsibility, the Foreign Ministry states that despite the crisis, the state's support for individual rights and freedoms including freedom of speech, press freedom, freedom of holding gatherings, freedom of demonstration, and so on, do not have a precedence, and this positive inclination is a clear manifestation of the intention and the determination of Afghanistan for the sound political future of the country in the general trend of mankind. For instance, following the principles of the human rights declaration and other international legal documents, the Afghan side has prepared in a desired manner grounds for the free contact of Mahmud Mestiri, special envoy of the UN secretary general, and no cooperation with national and international democratic foundations will be spared in the future too. The Foreign Ministry clearly declares that under the existing laws no opportunity has been allowed for the violation of the rights and freedoms, stated in the human rights declaration, in the areas that are under the rule of Afghanistan, and the situation will stay so in the future too.

Thereby the Islamic State of Afghanistan emphasizes its loyalty and commitment to international conventions of human rights and other international legal documents in this respect, and makes efforts for their implementation undeviatingly, and hopes that the related authorities of the esteemed U.S. State Department use authentic and neutral sources for the preparation and circulation of such reports and achieves its mission for the formation of world public opinion as the expectation is. Taking this opportunity, the Foreign Ministry of Afghanistan renews its best regards.

India

President Sharma Addresses Parliament

BK1302075295 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in Hindi 0604 GMT 13 Feb 95

[Speech by President Shankar Dayal Sharma to joint session of Parliament in New Delhi on 13 February; read by Vice President K.R. Narayanan—live, in English]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Honorable members: I welcome you to this session of Parliament. As I stand to address this year, I note that the optimism and self-assurance evident last year has been vindicated. The projections made have been fulfilled in substantial measure and it can be said with confidence now that the country has made the turnaround initiated by the new economic and other policies of the government. The people have responded handsomely by reasserting their faith in social stability. Political parties have also contributed to strengthening democracy and fundamental values such as the rule of law. Our country has improved the standing in the global community and now stands poised to become one of the rapidly growing economies of the world.

The law and order situation continued to be under control in 1994-95. There was no major communal riots in the country and incidents of violence were fewer. Polls in Goa, Sikkim, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Maharashtra have been peaceful. Government is determined to be watchful, particularly in respect of the secessionist and communal forces that pose a threat to the unity and integrity of the country.

On the Ayodhya [disputed temple-mosque] issue, one of the noteworthy developments is that the Supreme Court delivered its judgment on the reference made to it. It has upheld the validity of the Acquisition Act but not the provisions relating to abatement of the pending suits. The disputed area is vested in the Central Government, which is now to act as a statutory receiver for maintaining the status quo until the disposal of the revived suits. Compliance with the decision of the court is essential. The judgment recognizes a possibility of a resolution of the dispute through negotiations. It is of utmost importance that the improved atmosphere leads to a lasting solution to this dispute and we collectively ensure that communalism does not vitiate politics.

A separate Department of J and K [Jammu and Kashmir] Affairs has been set up under the prime minister. Vigorous efforts have been made to step up the pace of the development and economic activities in the state. Government has ensured availability of adequate funds to the state and will regularly assess its needs sympathetically in terms of the resources required for its developmental needs. The objective of revival of the democratic process is also being pursued. The delimitation of constituencies is being done and a work of revision of voters lists has been taken up by the Election Commission. Operations against militants are being intensified. The attempts by militants to disrupt the Amarnath Yatra [Hindu pilgrimage in Kashmir] were successfully foiled by the administration. In spite of the trying condition, the security forces are showing restraint and are sensitive to the feelings of the local people. Delegations of diplomats and parliamentarians visited the state and interacted freely with various sections of the people. This continuing transparency has generated overall confidence.

In the northeast, government is pursuing its policy of dealing firmly with insurgent activities. At the same time, efforts are being made to encourage these disruptive elements to abjure violence and join the national mainstream. The Government of Mizoram signed an accord with the Hmars People's Convention resulting in surrender of militants. There has been similar surrenders by ULFA [United Liberation Front of Assam] in Assam. As an agreement was signed in September 1994 providing for a Jharkhand Area Autonomous Council, a new bill incorporating the provisions of the agreement has been passed by the Bihar Assembly. Government is seized of the issues that have arisen in the hill areas agitation in Uttar Pradesh and is confident that given patience and sympathetic handling by all concerned, acceptable solution will be found. The National Human Rights Commission carried on its work with dedication. Government stands committed to its policy of promotion and preservation of human rights.

The economic reforms have brought out an upswing in the economy. During 1994-1995, the Gross Domestic Product at constant prices is expected to increase by 5.3 percent as against 4.3 percent last year. Industrial revival started with an 8 percent increase in production in the first half of 1994-95. Foreign exchange reserves rose from 15.1 billion [dollars] on 31.3.94 to over 19 billion in the last week of January 1995. Government was in a position to repay about 1.1 billion [dollars] to the IMF ahead of schedule. As a consequence of the strong revival of the industrial sector, imports increased by 23.9 percent; exports have also grown by 16.9 percent in dollar terms. The rupee continued to remain stable and was made convertible on current account.

Government is concerned about the increase in prices, especially of articles of mass consumption. The price situation is being watched closely, and measures are being taken to prevent shortages. In the case of some commodities like sugar and edible oil, prices had risen mainly [due] to insufficient domestic production. The comfortable foreign exchange position has enabled imports to augment supplies and control the rise of the prices. In the case of wheat and rice, open market sales out of public stocks of food grain held by the Food Corporation of India have also been undertaken. The public distribution system and revamped public distribution system are also being used to provide assistance in making essential commodities available. Further efforts will be continued in this direction. Remunerative minimum support prices would continue to be assured to the farmers to safeguard the country's food security. As far as essential commodities are concerned, government will pursue the twin objectives of ensuring adequate availability and fair prices with extra concessions for the poor.

The wide-ranging industrial deregulation has evoked commendable response from entrepreneurs. More than 17,000 investment intentions have been filed since July 1991 totalling investment of over Rs. [rupees] 350,000 crores with potential for direct employment for 3.4

million persons. Nearly 20 percent investment intention have so far been implemented and another 20 percent are at various stages of implementation. These are estimated to generate direct employment to the extent of 1.4 million persons.

Disbursements by our major financial institutions from April to December 1994 have showed a 39 percent increase over the same period in the previous year. The growth of domestic initiative has generated interest amongst foreign investors and collaborators. The confidence exhibited by foreign investors in the skills and resources of Indian partners is evident from the large foreign direct investment in joint ventures to the extent of 80 percent. Cumulative foreign direct investment approval since 1991 have exceeded Rs.20,000 crores, the bulk of it in long-gestation infrastructure projects. Government continued with its policy of reforms and deregulation in other sectors. The new drug policy and the telecom policy are steps in this direction.

The small-scale sector is an important component of our industrial base. Its production level being Rs. 241,648 crores and generating an employment of 139,000 persons. It recorded a growth of 7.1 percent last year. Exports from the sector are around Rs. 24,000 crores, accounting for nearly 35 percent of total exports. To meet the credit needs of the sector, the Reserve Bank of India had issued guidelines including the adoption of a single-window scheme in 85 districts where small-scale units are concentrated and setting up of specialized bank branches. Government will enhance support to the sector further through liberal assistance to technology upgradation. A high-power committee under the chairmanship of the prime minister has adopted an action plan for revitalizing and improving khadi [homespun cotton cloth] and village industries and generate additional employment for 2 million persons. A special employment program would be undertaken in 50 selected districts and intensive development of 125 blocks in the country would be promoted.

Employment for the educated youth is a prime concern of the government. The prime minister's Rozgar Yojna [employment scheme] which is being implemented from 2 October 1993 was designed to provide self-employment for youth in the urban area. It has been now extended to cover the rural areas also from this year. During the current year, 2.3 lakh educated youth will benefit from this program as against 31,797 last year. Government will provide loan to 7 lakh youths to generate 10 lakh employment opportunities before the end of the Eighth Plan period.

The production of nitrogenous fertilizers is expected to reach an all-time record of 78.2 lakh tons in 1994-95 in terms of nutrients. Production of phosphatic fertilizers is expected to increase from 18.5 lakh tons in 1993-94 to 23 lakh tons in 1994-95 in terms of nutrients. Government has continued with its efforts to increase the domestic production of fertilizers with five new plants likely to commence production shortly.

Government has continued to give high priority to the development of the agricultural sector. The production of food grains is expected to increase from 182 million tons last year to 185 million tons in the current year. Disbursement of agricultural credit was Rs. 15,100 crores during 1993-94 and is expected to reach a level of Rs. 16,700 crores during 1994-95. The area covered under irrigation is expected to go up by 2.77 million hectares in 1994-95, bringing the total area of irrigation to 87.82 million hectares. The consumption of fertilizer nutrients during 1994-95 is estimated at 136 lakh tons, showing an increase of about 10 percent over the consumption of 1993-94. Government has been promoting diversification schemes in rural areas to provide higher income from occupations like horticulture and fishing. Accordingly, the horticulture has been given an outlay of Rs. 1,000 crores in the current five-year plan as against an outlay of only Rs. 24 crores in the last five-year plan. Fish production, which recorded an all time high of about 46.8 lakh tons in 1993-94, is likely to reach a level of 47.5 lakh tons during 1994-95.

There has been a threefold increase in export of agricultural products during the last five years. Rural development is a central concern of all the developmental efforts of the government. Sharply targeted rural development programs underpin its employment strategy in poverty eradication. The central plan allocations for rural development schemes have been progressively enhanced during the last three years, and the current year's allocation of Rs. 7,010 crores is the highest ever in our planning history. The large outlay goes to provide additional wage employment as well as self-employment through mobilization of institutional finances on a large scale. Rs. 5,055 crores go to provide employment to the Jawahar Rozgar Yojna [JRY] [employment scheme] and the Employment Assurance Scheme. For Employment Assurance Scheme, an amount of Rs. 1,200 crores has been earmarked during the current year. The program has been expanded from 1,778 most backward blocks of the country to 2,279 blocks in the current year. In addition to the Jawahar Rozgar Yojna, an intensive JRY program focuses on 120 chronically backward districts. All the schemes together are expected to generate 1,470 million man-days of employment in the current year. The asset-cum- loan-based integrated rural development program, which provides self-employment, would cover about 2 million rural poor households from this year. The district and block-level credit plans are being coordinated more effectively and the average investment per household is being increased to Rs. 12,000. Rs. 2,000 crores of institutional credit would be mobilized through a subsidy of Rs. 1,098 crores. These programs will increasingly cater for the rural literate youth. Simultaneously, the program for development of women and children in rural areas is being extended to all the districts and will now provide Rs. 25,000 against Rs. 15,000 hitherto to women's groups to help them pursue economic activities and enhance group action in matters like literacy and family welfare, leading to women's empowerment.

As stipulated, by April 1994, all states amended their existing panchayat raj [village council] laws or have legislated new laws. Now it is necessary to hold elections and constitute panchayat at all levels. Some states have already made a beginning. In order to fulfill the high expectations of the people, the panchayat must be empowered with financial and administrative delegation. I call upon all the states to complete the panchayat electoral process without delay.

Government recognizes the need for an integrated program to deal with the problems of urban poverty. This program would include scientific disposal of urban wastes of all kinds. Voluntary organizations would be fully involved in its design and implementation. Government is seeking to formulate a scheme of 345 class-2 towns for the country, that has populations ranging from 50,000 to 100,000. The response from the states to the special component plans for the scheduled castes has been encouraging. The central allocation to states to supplement their efforts this year is Rs. 270,085 crores. An important step taken last year was the constitution of the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis [sanitation workers] to oversee the programs aimed at the liberation and rehabilitation of the safai karamcharis. The commission would address itself to rehabilitation programs, such as training, better mobilization of institutional finances, and the need for enhanced unit costs.

Efforts to strengthen and expand economic support programs to the poor by the provision of marginal money and loans through the National Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation have been stepped up, as has been its authorized share capital from Rs. 125 crores to Rs. 300 crores. The first step in providing for reservation of 27 percent for the OBC's [other backward classes] under the Government of India was taken in September 1993 and is under implementation. In order to ensure that the full benefits of this measure are available to the OBC's, the government relaxed the standards required for OBC candidates to be on par with the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes candidates and as a result 1,873 additional OBC candidates qualified for the Civil Services Preliminary Examinations 1994. Government has also decided to extend the three years age relaxation principle and to allow three additional attempts.

The National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation became operational in September 1994 with an authorized share capital of Rs. 500 crores to promote the economic development activities of the backward sections among the minorities and to assist the upgradation of their technical and entrepreneurial skills. An amount of Rs. 25 crores has been provided during the current year to the Maulana Azad Education Foundation. The foundation will set up residential schools for girls in low literacy slum and rural areas. Certain new measures are under consideration of the government for the protection of the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes [SC's and ST's] and the disabled. These are inclusion of SC's and ST's Prevention of Atrocities Act 1989 and the Protection of Civil Rights Act 1995 in the 9th Schedule of the Constitution; setting up of a commission under Article 339-1 of the Constitution to review the development strategies—like the tribal subplans and other measures presently in operation for the welfare and development of the scheduled tribes—so as to improve upon the strategies; legislation to provide equal opportunities to the handicapped in areas like education, vocational training, and employment placements, and a trust for the welfare and protection of the mentally retarded.

In matters relating to women and children, government's approach has been to provide an enabling policy environment in which their concerns, particularly those of the girl child, are the central focus of planning. Priority is given to the empowerment of women, support services, and nutrition programs. The noteworthy achievements in this process have been the adoption of the national nutrition policy, the setting up of a national nutrition council and the national creche fund and the implementation of the Mahila Samradhi Yojna [Women Empowerment Scheme]. The Mahila Samradhi Yojna has had an impressive response. By December 1994, 72 lakh accounts have been opened with the total deposits of rupees 6,590 crore. The national creche fund will assist in starting 1,800 additional creches by the end of the Eighth [five-year development] Plan to provide day care services to 45,000 children of working women and ailing mothers. As part of the efforts of covering the entire country with the integrated child development service program, it is proposed to cover 1,000 new blocs through community nutrition centers in 100,000 villages as a first step during 1995-96.

To achieve the goal of education for all by 2000 A.D., government will progressively raise the allocation of education so as to reach the target of six percent of GDP. Total literacy campaigns are now operational in 312 districts in the country, covering about 50 million learners in the 9-45 years age group. With the emergence of total literacy campaigns, it is now being perceived that universal adult literacy is an achievable task. The government is determined to eradicate child labor progressively in all employment and in hazardous industries by the year 2000 A.D. A national authority for elimination of child labor has been set up to coordinate actions for the core sectors of development administration such as education, rural development, women and child development, health and labor to device integrated programs that would bring about conditions conducive to withdrawal of children from employment and place them firmly in schools.

We are today in the forefront in the practical application of the space technology in vital areas. The Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle-D2 and the Augmented Satellite Launch

Vehicle—ASLV-D4—demonstrated our capacity to place satellites in the polar and near earth orbits. Our INSAT [Indian National Satellite] class satellites are providing services in telecommunication, TV broadcasting, meteorology, and disaster warning. The next satellite in the series INSAT-2C and the remote sensing series satellite IRS-1C are planned for launch in 1995. It is heartening to note that India has been selected for the setting up of a UN center for space science and technology education to cater to the needs of the Asia-Pacific region. To meet the aspirations of the people, to view programs in their own language, Doordarshan has reconsidered its satellite service. Out of 14 channels, 11 satellite channels are now exclusively for programs in regional languages.

The country continues to make strides in its efforts to harness the power of the atom for peaceful purposes. With the completion of the sixth Indian designed and constructed nuclear power reactor, the second unit of the Kakarapar atomic power station, which achieved critically on 8 January this year, the country once again proved its self-reliance in this advanced technology. There were also spinoffs from the use of nuclear technology, such as the production of nuclear-grade graphite, fabrication of medical lasers and development of parallel super computer.

Our Armed Forces maintained their vigilance in defending our international borders and maritime interests. They also made valuable contribution in counter-insurgency operations in Jammu and Kashmir and in the Northeast. Abroad, the Army won plaudits for its contributions to the UN peacekeeping efforts in Somalia, ably supported by the Indian Air Force and Navy, especially in the deinduction of forces.

In the conduct of international relations, we can view the past year with satisfaction. Existing friendships were reinforced and new understandings created around the world of our objectives and policies. Our continuing support for the United Nations, which observed its 50th anniversary this year, is based on the premise that it is the most effective instrument for the realization of humanity's common goals. India's initiatives at the United Nations included the need for the democratization of the world body and the enlargement of the UN Security Council's membership to reflect contemporary realities. We proposed a fourth special session on disarmament to address the post-cold war issues of global security.

In our own region, we will be hosting the next SAARC [South Asian Association For Regional Cooperation] summit in April this year and look forward to working with our SAARC colleagues to further strengthen regional cooperation. During the past year, closer bilateral relations with our neighbors continued to secure our attention. We welcome the new governments, which assumed office in Sri Lanka and Nepal, through multiparty democratic elections. We look forward to closer understanding and increasing cooperation with them as with all our other neighbors.

Pakistan has, however, continued on its distressing path of confrontation with India and unacceptable interference in our internal affairs. We have taken repeated initiatives with Pakistan to settle all unresolved issues between our two countries according to the Simla Agreement. Our offer for such a dialogue still stands. Meanwhile, we regret the unilateral steps taken by Pakistan to close their office in Bombay and the Indian consulate general in Karachi, thereby creating greater barriers to people-to-people contacts and commercial, cultural, and other relations.

The government has worked to consolidate understanding and cooperation with old and new friends abroad. My state visits to Bulgaria and Romania renewed the close ties that have existed for decades between India and the countries of Eastern Europe. Our vice president visited Australia, South Africa, and China, and the visits reinforced our ties with these countries. The prime minister's visit to the United Kingdom, the United States, Russia, and Vietnam and Singapore contributed significantly to all-around enhancement of our ties with them.

The visit to the United States, which resulted in greater mutual understanding on matters of concern to the two countries, opened a new chapter in bilateral relationship. It laid the groundwork for resurgent India-U.S. interaction, not only in the political, economic and commercial fields, but in other areas as well.

The prime minister's visits to the United Kingdom, Vietnam, and Singapore testified to our desire to reinforce ties with our European and Asian partners.

India-Russia ties gained in substance and momentum during the last year. The Moscow Declaration on the protection of the interests of the pluralistic states signed by President Yeltsin and our prime minister was a notable contribution to the conduct of interstate relations.

We recently welcomed President Nelson Mandela of South Africa as a chief guest for our Republic day celebrations this year. His visit marks a new chapter in the building up of India-South Africa cooperation in various fields.

Our efforts to effectively project abroad the success of our economic management on which depends the well-being of our people and the beneficial changes that are taking place as a result of economic liberalization have received excellent response in countries abroad. The momentum gathered by the country through these policies has to be sustained to ensure that the benefits that have started accruing are not frittered away. A combined effort is necessary to strengthen the confidence of investors in our economy and of the people, particularly the under-privileged, in the economic reforms. The tone and tenor of your debates reflect and greatly influence both. I am confident you will set the pace with due regard to these objectives. I commend you to your task and wish you success.

Jai Hindi [hail India] [applause]

Iran

Reaction to U.S. Representative Gingrich's Remarks

Foreign Ministry Implies 'Mental Imbalance'

LD1202174395 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A spokesman for our country's Foreign Ministry [Mahmud Mohammadi] today described the recent remarks made by the speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives [Newt Gingrich] as being hostile and arising from his mental imbalance and his vague and archaic imaginations. The spokesman recommended that he should at least watch the satellite transmission of the 11 February revolution day ceremonies, which show an example of solidarity between the Iranian nation and their chosen regime.

On 8 February, the speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives proposed that the United States should try to change the present regime in Iran, as a long-term solution to fighting the—according to him—Islamic dictatorship.

Our country's Foreign Ministry spokesman also pointed out: No government, neither Democrat nor Republican, in their political history has ever succeeded in ruling the U.S. nation with as much popularity and public support [as the Iranian Islamic regime has].

About the recent concern of the Zionist regime's new ambassador in Moscow vis-a-vis the Tehran-Moscow cooperation in the field of nuclear energy, the Foreign Ministry spokesman said: The Zionist regime is expressing such views because it is so internationally popular. This regime, as a violator of all international rules and regulations, must be expelled from the international community. This is a regime, which blatantly admits to be manufacturing nuclear weapons, opposes any inspection of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and lacks national legitimacy all over the occupied territories.

Nateq-Nuri Says Statements 'Illogical'

LD1202183995 Tehran IRNA in English 1817 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 12, IRNA—Majles Speaker 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri today blasted the speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, Newt Gingrich for calling for the overthrow of the Iranian government.

He said the stance taken by the U.S. official was "illogical" and stemmed from his lack of knowledge about Iran.

"The idea of attempting to change the Islamic system of government in Iran is stupid. Everytime the U.S. launched such an attempt, it became more and more disgraceful," he said at the open session of the Majles today. He added that this U.S. stance proved that pro-Islamic movements all over the world were expanding.

He said the Iranian people's culture and political understanding guaranteed the Islamic Republic system.

The speaker said the U.S. threat against the Muslim people of Iran was one of the major factor behind the massive participation of people at the 22nd bahman (February 11) rallies througout the country.

The propaganda launched by the U.S. and the other arrogant powers against the people of Iran led to more unity among them, the speaker stressed.

Nateq-Nuri then appreciated the people for their massive turn-out in Saturday's nationwide rallies.

Majles Statement Criticizes Remarks

LD1302083395 Tehran IRNA in English 0748 GMT 13 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 13, IRNA—The Majles Committee on Foreign Policy in a statement here Sunday [12 February] termed as stubborn the recent remarks of the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, Newt Gingrich.

It added that such statements indicate the arrogant and hegemonistic beliefs of the U.S. policy makers.

Gingrich on February 8 had said that Washington should try to change what he called the 'Islamic authoritarianism' in Iran by planning a long-term struggle.

"The remarks are not only contrary to international standards, but also indicate that the U.S. authorities are still in their daydreams of dominating other countries," the statement said adding "the American policy makers are only concerned about their own interests.

The U.S. Government had many times tried to prevent the victory of the Islamic revolution but failed, it said adding that, Gingrich should know that the U.S. Government and its mercenaries employed all their strength to strike several blows on Iran's national interests and therefore masterminded different military and non-military plots against Islamic Iran.

"The massive turn-out of people in 22nd Bahman (February 11) rallies in Iran was one of the manifestations of the the unity of Iranian nation. The arrogant powers should realize that the nation's determination and divined will would thwart the conspiracies of the U.S. imprudent politicians," it concluded.

Gingrich Said Engaging in 'Diabolical Diatribe'

LD1202220895 Tehran IRNA in English 2148 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 13, IRNA—TEHRAN TIMES in its editorial to appear on Monday

[13 February] criticized the recent remarks of the U.S. speaker of the House of Representatives, Newt Gingrich, and said he was "engaging in a diabolical diatribe against Iran." The editorial said that despite being a Republican, "Gingrich in his unfair attacks on Iran is every bit as venomous and vindictive as Democrat Warren Christopher. Gingrich's statements might well be a smoke screen to overshadow the Reagan administration's complicity in selling cluster bombs to Saddam Husayn."

It added that the trial of two Teledyne employees in Miami, charged with shipping 130 tons of zirconium to Chile, stands to further discredit former U.S. President Ronald Reagan and, hence, the Republican Party.

The English language daily noted that following the Miami trial, Gingrich's attacks were intended to show that the Reagan administration was right in aiding and abetting the Chilean arms dealer, Cardeon, in his profitable sales of 3000 cluster bombs to Iraq.

It advised Gingrich to study Iran's record since its revolution in 1979, and said Iran has been a victim of American-sponsored terrorism for the past sixteen years, as in only one bombing incident in Tehran, 72 of the Islamic revolution's elite politicians were butchered by the U.S.-manufactured bombs.

Iran suffered Iraqi chemical attacks but even once did not retaliate against Iraq in the like manner. Iran firmly believed that the use of chemical weaponry is against Islamic law.

The paper told Gingrich to have a course in ethics, and "if he really thinks that Iran is to blame for every act of terrorism which occurs in the world, he only needs to educate himself on Iran. Rather than a perperator of terrorism, Iran has been a victim of terrorism."

Commentary: Washington Middle East Meeting Will Fail

LD1202145695 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 12 Jan 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The foreign ministers of Egypt, Jordan, the Zionist regime and the chief negotiator of the PLO are attending a meeting in Washington today hosted by the U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

The one-day Washington session will open in the presence of the U.S. President Bill Clinton.

It is clear that the present deadlock in talks with the Zionist regime is the direct result of the regime's unprincipled and expansionist policies.

As a matter of fact the Zionist regime has created the present conditions by trampling all the promises and agreements that it had committed to honor since the beginning of the compromise talks.

Ignoring the basic principles of talks that is peace for land in line with resolutions 242 and 328, shattering the [word indistinct] framework of the Arab-Israel talks, signing separate agreements and the non-enforcement of the Gaza-Eriha accord to the letter, all have led to the present deadlock.

The Arab sides involved in the compromise talks with the Zionist regime are also considered to have contributed effectively in bringing about the situation.

Analysts believe that by signing the rather limited and tight self-rule agreement with the PLO, the Zionist regime tried to open a window from two angles by making the PLO as the main axis. [as heard] First, to have peace of mind as far as the Palestinian combatant groups were concerned and resolve the issue of the Palestinian ideals within the framework of a rather limited and meaningless autonomy, and second to enter the Arab world's political and economic scene through the channel of the self-rule government.

(?But these) have fired back despite the Zionist regime's calculations.

The present deadlock in the PLO-Tel Aviv talks on the implementation of the second phase of the self-rule is the result of: the Israeli troop's non-withdrawal from the West bank, not providing conditions for the elections to be held and continued detention of thousands of Palestinians in the Israeli prisons.

This shows the fact that the self-rule accord is more vulnerable now than any other time in the past.

The accord was reached with U.S. support and with the intention of enabling the Zionist regime to extract maximum concessions from the Arab sides against granting them the minimum of concessions.

This accord makes the dark and ambiguous perspective of signing such a deal with the Zionist usurpers more and more clear.

But whether the Washington's session, given the Zionist regime's obstructionism, will be able to break the present deadlock is something which seems improbable in view of the concerns of those having compromised with the Zionist regime, with respect to the fate of the trend of compromise. [as heard]

Foreign Ministry Summons German Charge D'Affair

LD1002163695 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 10 Feb 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Iranian Foreign Ministry today summoned the German charge d'affair and expressed Iran's strong protest to the recent statements by the German economic cooperation and development minister.

The German charge d'affair, who had been called in the absence of this country's ambassador, expressed regret and said the private views of a minister cannot be the official stance of the German Government.

He added that growing relations between the two countries indicated the official stance of the Bonn government regarding the expansion of relations with Tehran.

Daily Views 'Insulting Remarks'

LD1302072695 Tehran IRNA in English 0704 GMT 13 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 13, IRNA—A morning daily here today editorialized on the insulting remarks made against the Islamic Republic of Iran by German Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development Carl-Dieter Spranger in an interview with a Bonn newspaper.

The German charge d'affaires in Tehran, representing his out-of- town ambassador, was summoned to the Foreign Ministry where he received a strong protest, the English-language 'IRAN NEWS' wrote.

"Although the German diplomat's response was that the personal opinion of a minister should not be taken as the official stance of his government, certain facts cannot be overlooked," it added.

In the years following the Islamic revolution, Irano-German relations have assumed expansive dimensions in all spheres, particularly in the economic field, where Germany has recently become our country's biggest trade partner, the paper noted.

"Menanwhile, in the region's geographic market divisions, Germany has proved the sole contender in the Iranian market by successfully chasing out its other rivals," it said.

But the fact is that the bulk of goods Germany has sold to Iran in the past 15 years have been consumable commercial goods, with bonn not showing much enthusiasm towards participating in our country's major long-term projects which, more than anything else, require the transfer of technology, the article stated.

Furthermore, it wrote, the Iranian people will never forget the fact that the Germans, pressured by their country's influential zionist factions, left behind in Iran what amounted to the world's largest and costliest ruin, namely the unfinished Bushehr nuclear power facilities.

"And the people will not forget that throughout the course of the Iraqi-imposed war, while Iranian oil revenues were being spent in Hamburg and Frankfurt on consumer goods, and while the politicians in Bonn were putting on a facade of deep friendship with Iran, the German military experts were busy manufacturing chemical weapons for the Iraqis intended for use against the citizens of Iran in blatant contradiction of all international regulations," it stressed.

Unklike Britain or the U.S., Germany has no past record of neo- colonial domination over Iran, it said and added that, in the opinion of the ordinary Iranian, Germans are traditionally regarded as a hard-working, serious and honest people.

"It would be in Germany's *national interest*, not to further tarnish its image in the public opinion of this country," the daily said and concluded that, this would require the presence of astute statesmen at the helm in Bonn who have the ability to recognize and safeguard the interests of their country, and certainly not of the likes of Spranger.

Rafsanjani, Chadian Foreign Minister Meet

LD1202131795 Tehran IRNA in English 1229 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 12, IRNA—President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani says that promotion of cooperation with African and Muslim countries is an undeniable principle of Iran's foreign policy.

Rafsajani, who was speaking to Chadian external relations minister, Ahmat Abderamane Haggar here Sunday, added that the Islamic Republic of Iran was ready to render educational, developmental, technical and industrial assistance to Chad.

The minister, here to take part at the ten-day dawn (February 1-11) celebrations marking the triumph anniversary of the 1979 Islamic Revolution, said the Iranian revolution was not only a great honour to the Iranian nation but to all world Muslims.

He briefed president Rafsanjani on the latest political and economic developments in Chad and called on Iran to further contribute to removal of problems and implementation of development projects in his country.

Tehran Marchers Issue Resolution Denouncing U.S.

LD1102121395 Tehran IRNA in English 1059 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 11, IRNA—Millions of people who participated in the massive rally today to mark the 16th anniversary of the victory of the Islamic revolution, in a resolution described the U.S. as the root cause of all inhumane crimes and conspiracies in various corners of the world and a supporter of aggressive moves of the international Zionism and terrorism.

The people started their march from various parts of the city at 08:30 hours local time (05:00 GMT) towards Azadi Square, in west of the capital city. The participants stressed the necessity for confronting seditions of the U.S. and said as long as the U.S. Administration was negating Islamic values and showing hostility by violating legitimate rights of the Iranian nation, "any ties with the Great Satan is a futile thought."

The ralliers stressed unquestionable obedience to the instructions of the leader of the Islamic revolution as a religious task and as the only means to save the Islamic ummah.

Mentioning that confrontation of Muslims with global arrogance has reached its most obvious forms, the participants underlined support for the rights of the oppressed people in the world as one of unalterable and everlasting principles of the Islamic system.

Voicing support for all the genuine Islamic movements, the participants denounced the heinous crimes of the Serbs, massacre of the oppressed Chechen Muslims, silence of international organizations and disgraceful compromise of ractionary regimes in the region with the usurper government of Israel.

Also voicing support for President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the resolution called on the authorities to use all their potentials to establish social justice, remove problems and harness uncontrolled inflation rate and high prices.

'Massive Turnout' at Marches Praised

NC1202091195 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 12 Feb 95

[Commentary by the News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yesterday, on the 16th anniversary of the victory of the Islamic revolution and the beginning of the 17th spring of freedom, again the massive turnout of our ever-present-on- the-scene people revived the memories of the magnificent victory of the Islamic revolution. The unequalled congregation of Tehran's fasting residents in Azadi Square and the surrounding streets shouted slogans expressing the long-standing hopes of the Islamic revolution.

In these forceful ceremonies, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani addressed the people in Azadi Square and recalled the objectives and hopes of the revolution. He stressed the presence of the people in the arena of the defense of the Islamic revolution and the impotence of the United States before them. The grand march of millions of people on 11 Bahman belied the ceaseless propaganda of the Western mass media, which say that the people's revolutionary sentiments are waning. It proved that 16 years after the victory of the revolution this great movement continues to forge ahead on its path with the backing of the people.

One of the main axes of the enemy's attacks on the bases of the revolution is to assess the level of the people's support for it. The foreign mass media have constantly striven to project the impression that the effects of social, economic, and political change in society have been harmful and negative as far as the people's steadfastness is concerned. Thus they conclude that the difficulties following the revolution, which stem mainly from their own plots, have disenchanted the revolutionary people of our country.

But our fasting people, who began converging in droves in the early hours of the morning, coming from various routes toward Azadi Square, the permanent venue marking the revolution, filled the air with their resonant slogans on the revolution's hopes. This was a complete and comprehensive response to all the relentless but unfounded propaganda and proved that awareness, intelligence, faith, and steadfastness are forging ahead on the path of growth and greatness, like the Islamic revolution. With a vigilant presence in every sensitive time for the revolution, the people are safeguarding the revolution's values.

The people deserve appreciation and gratitude as the greatest asset of the past, present, and future of the Islamic revolution. It is clear that with their support the revolution will continue its exaltation and growth.

Interior Minister Discusses Revolution Gains

NC1202094095 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 1 Feb 95 p 18

[First part of a two-part interview with Interior Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati by unidentified correspondent in Tehran; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] The aftermath of the revolution victory is marked by some distinctive characteristics, special incidents, and phenomena and is considered to be historically important. How do you see this sensitive period after the victory?

[Besharati] Every revolution has problems in proportion with how much it has threatened the interests of the powers of world arrogance. The more extensive the revolution the greater its importance and the more events it sparks off. [passage omitted]

The revolution in Iran was more dangerous, painful, and fantastic for the United States than revolutions in other countries in the region. This is because the shah pursued and implemented Washington's strategy in the region, and this greatly humiliated the United States. The occupied Jerusalem regime's fear regarding the revolution was so immense that the one-eyed Zionist General Moshe Dayan, the victor and usurper of the Sinai desert in the Arab-Israel war, said: "The Islamic revolution in Iran has generated an earthquake of great intensity in the Middle East." [passage omitted]

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] The grand Islamic revolution caused immense upheaval at home and abroad. This change, this upheaval, was the reason for the major gains of the divine movement. What are the revolution's most important gains?

[Besharati] All the events of the grand Islamic revolution are important. But the occupation of the U.S. den of spies [U.S. Embassy in Tehran] is the most important one. As the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, his eminence Imam Khomeyni, may God be pleased with him, said: We will sever the roots of the plunderers with a revolution bigger than the first revolution. [passage omitted]

Fortunately, with the occupation of the U.S. den of spies, Carter encountered an unimaginable nightmare, worse than the victory of the revolution. Instead of plotting against the Islamic revolution, the United States had to concentrate all its efforts on gaining the release of its spies in Tehran. This aspect of the occupation of the U.S. den of spies is one of its most important effects. But some of the most astonishing aspects of this issue have not been divulged clearly. [passage omitted]

Views 'Cultural Onslaught'

NC1202095195 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 2 Feb 95 p 14

[Second part of a two-part interview with Interior Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati by unidentified correspondent in Tehran; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] One of the important topical issues is the "cultural onslaught" by the enemies of Islamic culture and values. What form does this extensive onslaught take and what are the ways to combat it?

[Besharati] Many years after the victory of the Islamic revolution, during which all sorts of plots were used and were defeated, the world of colonialism has concluded that in order to defeat the Islamic revolution, the people should be stripped of Islamic culture. The youth should be led astray and the women should be steered toward immorality, just like the women and girls before the revolution.

This would only be possible if the people were to relinquish their pure Islamic beliefs and to forsake their slogans of "freedom, independence, and an Islamic Republic" and then to act in accordance with the wishes of their sworn enemies. We know the cultural onslaught is more dangerous than a military invasion. It is because of this that Ayatollah Khamene'i, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the Majles, thinkers, scholars, and all others have the same reaction toward a cultural onslaught, and this is how it should be.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] In view of current developments in the world, including the collapse of the communist system and political and cultural moves by the Western bloc, how do you view the present position and the future of the Islamic revolution?

[Besharati] In general, whenever a power sees its rival exit the scene, it interprets the reason as its own power and influence. History bears eloquent testimony to this fact. [passage omitted]

Today, the United States believes that the credit for the defeat of the Soviet Union goes to U.S. power and influence, and to Western culture on principle. It is ignorant of the fact that the United States is suffering the same symptoms that resulted in the dissolution of the Soviet Union. [passage omitted]

Mohtashami on Perpetuation of Revolution Objectives

NC1002130395 Tehran JAHAN-E ESLAM in Persian 4 Feb 95 pp 1-2

[First of an unspecified number of installments of an interview with Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin 'Ali Akbar Mohtashami by unidentified correspondent in Tehran; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [JAHAN-E ESLAM] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful.

Let me congratulate Your Excellency on the 16th anniversary of the victory of the Islamic revolution; you are one of the prominent faces of the revolution, a member of the country's Militant Clerics, and have to your credit years of activity alongside his eminence the imam, may God be pleased with him.

We take this opportunity to ask you about the objectives of the revolution, its needs, and the conditions we are in now. The Islamic revolution in Iran triumphed when the world was divided according to two modes of thought—Communism and Capitalism. That world, ultimately, was one bereft of all spirituality. The Islamic revolution in Iran and the call of the imam were an answer to the quest of such international spirituality in human beings.

It was the answer to the desire of all the oppressed on this earth. Naturally this revolution generated cultural, economic, and political upheaval. The question now is: Have the revolutionary Muslim Iranians adhered to the objectives delineated by his eminence? Is our society moving along the path of these objectives?

[Mohtashami] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. I wish to convey my congratulations on the auspicious advent of the month of Ramadan and the beginning of the Ten Days of Dawn. [passage omitted]

As to whether the officials and echelons are acting in line with the revolution's objectives and regarding my assessment of them, I should state: It is not as if all the executive officials are adhering to the objectives of the revolution and the imam 100 percent. If we talk in relative terms, we can describe some quarters' performance as positive, while there are some who have become alienated from the Islamic revolution. [passage omitted]

Let me summarize: We have one main objective—the rule of pure Muhammadan Islam. The means to obtain this is the system and the regime of the Islamic Republic. How did we reach this objective and means? When the leadership brought all the nation's strata onto the scene and into the arena of struggle.

The imam always said: Our revolution achieved victory due to the blessings of the Almighty and the presence of our people. Now if we wish to preserve the revolution and its objectives we should retain the original factors responsible for the victory. The factors that generated the revolution are the reasons for its perpetuation. [passage omitted]

Berates Officials for Deviating

NC1002130995 Tehran JAHAN-E ESLAM in Persian 6 Feb 95 pp 1-2, 9

[Second of an unspecified number of installments of an interview with Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin 'Ali Akbar Mohtashami, by unidentified correspondent in Tehran; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] The imam struggled for 15 years to enlighten the people and instill political awareness and analytical acumen in the general public, which he did very well. There may be people who have such political faculties and have a keen understanding of political problems but they do not have confidence in handling their own political future. This means that they do not have faith in their own political understanding and acumen or believe they can play a political role.

Suppose the people of Lebanon and some other Arab countries, such as Egypt and Palestine—renowned for their political grasp and analysis, perhaps even more so than the Westerners and Western politicians—could analyze things well but did not permit themselves to be confident regarding their analysis and the ability to stand on their own feet or forge their own future.

The Arabs have a servile mentality and they wish to lean on others. The imam came and politicized the people; this is another role he played. [passage omitted]

There are some who go to the universities and state that students, even university students, do not have the right to elect representatives to the Majles. The nomination and introduction of candidates is among the obligations of the clergy and seminaries! The imam mentioned those who said that politics are segregated from religion and that clerics should not interfere in political affairs. Today they are doing the same in the universities, which is just as dangerous. Universities should be political. They should nominate candidates and elect them. The imam respected public opinion. He was not ready to jeopardize it. He involved people in their own future.

This was the secret of the imam's success, the victory of the Islamic revolution, and the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran. If this continued, it would prove a strong guarantee for the revolution and its objectives.

Unfortunately, the officials and executives of the system have distanced themselves greatly from those principles, values, and criteria. They have deviated from those objectives, policies, and expediencies that existed then and should correct themselves, at least if they wish to retain their own little world.

Opposition Group Calls For Democracy on Anniversary

NC1102172995 Paris AFP in English 1441 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb 11 (AFP)—A nationalist opposition group urged Iranians here on Saturday [11 February] to unite to press for democratic changes on the 16th anniversary of the Islamic revolution.

The Party of the People of Iran (PPI), headed by former labor minister Daryush Foruhar [spelling as received], warned that Iran faced "dangerous times amid a horrifying crisis created under the Islamic leadership."

"In such anxiety-ridden times, it is not right to wait any longer. We should aim for democracy through a quiet transition in a bid to achieve a free life and a developed country," the group said in a statement.

It called on "all groups and people from all walks of life to overcome any disillusionment and unite in a bid to pressure Islamic leaders in Iran to end their bullying, conduct free elections and revive the rule of the people."

PPI is not authorised to engage in political activities and does not honor the constitution, but is tolerated.

The Iranian constitution recognises the rights of political parties on the condition they do not threaten the Islamic system of government in Iran.

"It's a pity that despite the widespread anger and people's readiness to destroy despotism, opposition groups are unable to overcome their differences and unite" against the government, the group deplored.

It accused the Islamic government in Iran of "losing many historical opportunities and failing to produce fundamental changes in political, cultural social and economic arenas."

Foruhar served as a labor minister in the provisional government which emerged after the 1979 revolution which toppled the pro-Western shah, but was forced to resign amid differences with the Shiite Moslem clergy, led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni.

Several hundred thousand people meanwhile gathered at a square here on Saturday to celebrate the 16th anniversary of the revolution.

President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani praised the turnout as an indication of public support for the government despite "efforts by the enemy to make Iranians disillusioned" with their revolution.

Khamene'i Pardons Prisoners, Commutes Sentences

LD1102160995 Tehran IRNA in English 1556 GMT 11 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 11, IRNA—On the occasion of the 16th anniversary of the triumph of the Islamic revolution in Iran, the leader of the Islamic revolution Ayatollah Seyed 'Ali Khamene'i last Thursday [9 February] pardoned a number of prisoners convicted at different Iranian courts of law.

The list of the various types of crimes whose hearing were entrusted with general courts, or Islamic revolution courts, or courts martial had been earlier handed to the leader by the head of the judiciary, Ayatollah Yazdi with a request for the pardon of those convicted.

In response to Ayatollah Yazdi's request on the occasion of the anniversary of the victory of Islamic revolution, the leader accepted to pardon or to commute the sentences of those convicted as requested in the letter of the head of the judiciary.

Envoy Says U.S. 'Not Honest' in Desire for Negotiations

LD1302092195 Tehran IRNA in English 0736 GMT 13 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 13, IRNA—The U.S. was not honest in its claim that it wanted direct negotiations with Iran in an effort to resume deplomatic relations, said a senior Iranian official.

Kamal Kharrazi, Iran's permanent envoy to the U.N. said in an exclusive interview with IRAN NEWS that "our conditions for the resumption of ties with the United States have not changed but we beleive that the Americans are not honest in their claim that they want to have dialogue with Tehran,".

U.S. Undersecretary of State Arthur Howes said recently that Washington was ready to hold direct negotiations with Iran, he added.

The veteran diplomat said that the Americans want to impose their views on Iran. But if one day Iran feels that the Americans are honest, have abandoned their hegemonic policies, want to settle their difference with us as two independent states based on mutual respect for each other, the situation would be different.

"We really believe that the U.S. is after domination and wants a relationship of the sort it had with the former shah. If they are really honest, they should show it."

He further said that "the Americans imposed sanctions on us, blocked our assets, shot down our passenger plane, backed our enemy (in the war) and displayed all other types of hostility against Iran. Therefore, they shoud take some steps to show they have changed their policies and have good-will. But so far they have failed to do this."

Kharrazi, 50, has been Iran's envoy to the United Nations since 1989. He holds a Ph.D in education from the U.S. He served as the managing director of the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) after the revolution, and during the Iraqi war was in charge of publicity. He was also acting foreign minsiter in the early days following the 1979 Islamic revolution. He is married and has two sons.

On the current escalation of Washington's anti-Iran propaganda, Kharrazi said: "The main purpose behind this propaganda ballyhoo is to support Israel. In other words, it is the interests of Israel that prompt the levelling of such accusations against the Islamic Republic of Iran. Israel is trying to evade the pressure it is under for not signing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and therefore, propagates Iran's alleged nuclear threat. It wants to neutralize the historical role played by Iran in coordinating the third world countries at the NPT conference."

Iran's U.N. envoy ruled out the possibility of Israel joining the NPT, but said whether Israel signs the treaty or not, the 3rd world countries, including Iran, are seriously considering not to extend the NPT unlimitedly.

The reason, he added, is that the industrialized countries and those with advanced technologies, have not fulfilled their commitments to help the devoloping countries.

He said the Democrats enjoy less independence in their policies than the Republicans.

They (the Democrats) are very much influenced by the Israelis. in fact, they are the (?spokesmen) of the Israelis", he said.

Asked why the U.N. failed to deal effectively with the tragic situation in Bosnia, he said it was because the dominant powers at the world body did not have "strategic interests" to deal with its root cause and prevent this aggression and genocide.

He then drew a comparison between the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and Bosnia. He said the West's interests required them to check Saddam's aggression immediately.

Concerning the relation with Iraq and if Iran favored removal of the economic sanctions against that country, Kharrazi said the situation of the Iraqi people was different from that of the ruling regime.

"We are certainly concerned about the situation of the Iraqi people and the severe economic problems they are suffering from. We must see how we can help the Iraqi people to save them from this difficult situations."

As regards the Iraqi Government, he said it had no choice but to follow the U.N. Security Council resolutions. "We are two neighoring countries after all and naturally want our relations to improve. But unfortunately, the Iraqi Government has failed to settle the simple question of our prisoners of war. It refuses to release the remainder of our POWs or at least give us some convincing information regarding their (?fate)."

He went on and said that talks between the two countries were underway and the Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati has been invited to visit Baghdad. He said no fixed time has been set for the visit and that it would take place after preliminary talks at expert level between the two countries are held.

Pointing to the recent denial by Iraq that it was holding any Iranian POWs, Kharrazi said it was because Iraq was under pressure.

"We have evidence, including pictures, letters and television films, that there are Iranian prisoners in Iraq and Baghdad should cooperate with international organizations in this respect" he concluded.

Bomb Explodes at Mosque in Narmak; No Casualties

LD1202071695 Tehran IRNA in English 0608 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 12, IRNA—A sound bomb went off in al-Nabi Mosque in Narmak, east of Tehran, Saturday [11 February] night.

The bomb which was planted in the stair-case of the mosque's library, went off when the worshippers were listening to a sermon.

The explosion shattered window panes of the mosque. People staying in nearby houses rushed out when they heard the explosion.

The law enforcement sources of the locality told IRNA that the person accused of planting the bomb was arrested five hours after the explosion.

There was no casualty, however, investigations are under way to identify the culprit and analyze the detonative materials used in the bomb.

JAHAN-E ESLAM Banned for Reportedly Violating Press Law

LD1202164195

[FBIS Editorial Report] Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian at 1515 GMT on 12 February carries the 15-minute "Press Review" program, which includes the following comment on the publication ban imposed on the JAHAN-E ESLAM newspaper:

"Following the publication in today's issue of the SALAM newspaper of the news about the ban imposed on JAHAN-E ESLAM, KEYHAN gives reasons why the newspaper's publication right has been withdrawn, citing the Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance's director general in charge of the domestic press. In this report, which is on page 15 of today's KEYHAN, the violation of clauses five, seven, and eight of Article Six of the press law is stated as the reason why the publication right of JAHAN-E ESLAM has been withdrawn. The said legal clauses underline the importance of honoring religious sanctities and of respecting national interests and security."

Official Suggests Reasons for Ban

NC1202103595 Paris AFP in English 0937 GMT 12 Feb 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb 12 (AFP)—Iranian authorities have banned a radical Islamic left-wing newspaper run by the brother of the Iranian leader Ayatollah 'Ali Khamenei, an official at the daily said Sunday [12 February].

JAHAN-E-ESLAM (The World of Islam), representing Islamic leftists who have been sidelined from power, was ordered by the culture ministry to stop publishing on Thursday after it printed several stories critical of the government, he told AFP.

The official, who requested anonymity, said he doubted the decision had been taken at a low level and that the issue was raised at a meeting of the Iranian cabinet, chaired by President 'Ali Akhbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani on Wednesday.

No official reasons were given for the suspension of the paper, founded in 1991 and run by Hadi Khamenei, he said.

But he added that it could have been prompted by the publication of an interview with former MP and interior minister 'Ali Akhbar Mohtashami.

In the interview Mohtashami launched a stinging attack on Rafsanjani's economic liberalisation program, blaming the government for the country's growing economic crisis. He challenged Rafsanjani to a public debate on the country's economic situation.

It was the first daily to be banned in Iran in several years though the authorities have closed several weeklies. The official at JAHAN-E-ESLAM said he could not tell whether the ban would be permanent.

The paper, which enjoys the support of Islamic intellectuals, claims to follow on the path set by the founder of the Islamic republic Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni and it espouses social justice and democracy within the framework set by the constitution.

It has been critical of Rafsanjani's market-reform program and economic open-door policies of the early 1990s.

JAHAN-E-ESLAM said over a week ago that Mohtashami had revealed "new details" about the PanAm bombing which killed 270 passengers in December 1988 over Lockerbie, Scotland. But the paper was banned before it could publish the story.

The ban is considered a new setback for Iranian radical newspapers, which are among the few dailies here to publish independent information, prompting Rafsanjani to launch frequent attacks against them.

Another radical daily, SALAM, has been forced to moderate its tone following mounting pressure from the authorities and after its chief editor, Abbas Abdi was arrested in August 1993 and jailed for eight months. The charges against him were never publicly revealed.

Pakistan

Reaction to Ramzi Ahmad Yusuf Extradition to U.S.

JUP Chief Criticizes Move

BK1302113895 Karachi DAWN in English 13 Feb 95 p 1

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Karachi, Feb 12—Maulana Shah Ahmad Noorani, chief of Jamiat Ulema-i-Pakistan [JUP], on Sunday [1 February] has flayed the extradition of Ramzi Ahmad Yusuf to the United States and termed this action of the government an insult to the higher judiciary, including the Supreme Court.

In a statement, Maulana Noorani, said: "It is possible that parents of Ramzi are Pakistani and thus before handing him over to America, the matter should have been first tackled by the Supreme Court". He said, "If America has any concrete proof for Ramzi's involvement in the explosion of the World Trade Centre, Pakistan ought to ask the US government to furnish that proof in the higher courts of Pakistan." The JUP chief said that the government had no right to hand over Ramzi to the US without prior permission of the Supreme Court. He said the government had no respect for the law and now the US could summon any Pakistani by declaring him an accused.

Maulana Noorani lamented that the government had regretted the death of six Americans and therefore and it handed over Ramzi secretly to America but it is least worried about killings in Karachi.

Meanwhile, Prof Shah Faridul Haq, Vice President of JUP, observed on Sunday that sectarian and nationalist elements had made Karachi the centre of their vested interest.

Talking to a delegation of Anjuman Naujawanan-i-Islam, led by Tariq Mehhoob Prof Shah Faridul Haq said that terrorists and anti-social elements had made the life of common man miserable.

He charged the administration of conspiring to divide Baldia town populace into ethnic groups.

Islamic Organizations Condemn 'Ousting'

BK1202105195 Karachi DAWN in English 12 Feb 95 p 3

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Karachi, Feb 11: The Jamaat-i-Islami [JI] and Tanzeem-i-Islami on Saturday [11 February] lashed out at the government over the extradition of Ramzi Ahmad Yusuf to the United States, allegedly involved in bombing of New York's World Trade Centre in 1993.

In separate statement, they said the ousting of Mr Ramzi was a matter of serious concern for all the Islamic forces.

JI divisional chief Nematullah Khan said the extradition of Mr Ramzi and seven Pakistanis (alleged narco barons) to the US was tantamount to the acceptance of slavery.

He said the government should have tried these suspects in the country rather than handing them over to the US authorities.

Mr Khan demanded of the US and European countries to extradite singers Michael Jackson and Madonna and writers Salman Rushdi and Tasleema Nasreen to Pakistan.

He said these singers and writers had destroyed the moral and spiritual values and caused irreparable damage to the humanity.

JI Demands Return of Yusuf

BK1302122795 Karachi DAWN in English 13 Feb 95 p 4

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Karachi, Feb 12: City chief of Jamaat-i-Islami, Naimatullah Khan, has expressed indignation over "open US interference in the internal affairs of Pakistan" and demanded of the government to withdraw the extradition decision of an "accused" arrested in Pakistan.

In a statement, he alleged that the policies of the present government from nuclear programme, Kashmir issue, Afghanistan conundrum, Gwadar land deal, deluge of obscenity, price spiral, to the decision of extradition of Ramzi Yusuf, and seven smugglers to the US government had been taken in Washington.

He said: "our power hungry rulers have mortgaged the country to the US which is indulging in blackmailing."

Violation of International Conduct Seen

BK1302080695 Islamabad THE NATION in English 13 Feb 95 p 2

[Article by Ishtiaq Ahmad under the rubric "Diplomatic Focus": "Of Ramzi's Arrest, Rashid's Conviction"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad—On Sunday [12 February], the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran celebrated its national day on the occasion of the 16th anniversary of the country's Islamic Revolution.

In this connection a reception was held here at the embassy compound, with Mohammad Mehdi Akhondzadeh as the chief host. Yousaf Giluni, Asif Zardqri, Mir Abdul Jabbar (Deputy Senate Chairman), Sajid Naqvi (TNFJ [Tehrik-i-Nifaz-i-Fiqa-i-Jafria] leader), Nawabzada Nasrullah, Sartaj Aziz and Foreign Secretary Najmuddin Sheikh were among the prominent local faces, amid a large gathering of diplomats and other dignitaries. With Gilani as chief guest, the reception was well-attended, despite the fact that it took place during the month of Ramadan.

Sheikh Rashid's conviction, Ramzi Yusuf's arrest were the two most discussed about things and most of the guests appeared to be critical of the two incidents. "Who the hell are Americans to come to this country, nab one person and, then, safety take him to the US?" Remarked one envoy of a Muslim country. In view of the latest incident, in which the Bhutto government has helped the US extradite from this country its "most wanted terrorist" accused of bombing the World Trade Centre two years ago. The general impression was that the American were increasingly violating the norms of international conduct by exhibiting a highly arrogant behaviour.

Some envoys were of the view that it was just the life and honour of individuals that was at stake, the US was also up against destroying the states as such, states which do not conform to the American beliefs and practices in the present-day turbulent world era. "After Iraq, it was the turn of Iran and Syria now," believed one emissary. "You will see that the Clinton administration will, sooner or later, impose the United Nations-mandated economic sanctions against these two countries and then strike at them," he speculated.

Criticism on Sheikh's conviction was made with the argument that it was, apparently, part of the process of victimisation by the PPP [Pakistan People's Party] regime of its political opponents. But Zardari had a different explanation on the issue. "The government is not victimising any one. They are being arrested and convicted due to their own misdeeds. I remained in jail for over two years. If I had any revengeful intention, why would I wait for one-and-a- half-year?"

National Assembly Speaker Mr Gilani also talked about recent defections in the PML(N) [Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz] ranks and the pamphlet circulated recently against him in the Parliament House. According to his information, only three MNAs [member of National Assembly] of the PML(N) have so far applied for separate seats in the Assembly. They are Zohair Akram Nadeem, Nawaz Khokhar and Rao Khizar Hayat.

The Speaker did not know that another PML(N) MNA Ghulam Muhammad Mehr had also applied for a separate seat. "Before allotting the defectors separate seats, I will consult the relevant law," Regarding the pamphlet issue, he said investigations are "underway."

Editorial Assails Transfer

BK1302074295 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN OBSERVER in English 13 Feb 95 p 6

[Editorial: "Sovereignty compromised"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] One of the suspects of the World Trade Centre blast, Ramzi Ahmad Yusuf, who had arrived in Pakistan a few days ago, was handed over to the US authorities immediately after his arrest. Though Islamabad was praised by Clinton for prompt action, many people find the circumstances surrounding Ramzi affair rather intriguing. The haste in surrendering the man to a foreign power to curry its favour indicates an excess of zeal to oblige US which ill becomes a sovereign state. In this case undue liberty was taken with normal procedures only to fulfil the wishes of the US President. That the man was in Pakistan simply means that either he was a visitor from another country on a transit visa or a Pakistani citizen. Were it otherwise, he would not have been allowed to enter and stay. In either case, he was under the laws of Pakistan. He should have been presented before a magistrate with the formal extradition request from the interested country. The accused also have their right of appeal to higher courts against possible extradition. Until the disposal of his appeal, he had every right to stay where he happened to be. Another embarrassing aspect of the smelly affair is the US $ two million award which tempted one of our citizens to betray a fellow human being.

There is another dimension of the problem which is equally unedifying. The man was not an ordinary criminal but working for what he apparently perceived was a cause. Though very few in Pakistan will condone the methods allegedly used by Ramzi and his companions, motives are not necessarily without some logic, however bizarre. In this situation, catching and extraditing a human being for the sake of some dollars and a Clinton smile is perilously close to betraying some sacred principles. Also one must not forget millions of people feel that the country we are so keen to oblige is itself sponsor of state terrorism in places which mean so much to our people. Washington used clustered bombs on fleeing Iraqis denying them the opportunity to surrender. They shot down an Iranian passenger plane during Iran-Iraq war. They are supporting Serbian expansion in the Balkans and Jewish hegemony in the Middle East. Its Secret Service engineered the assassination of many Third World leaders who refused to obey Washington's orders. The chain of events that led to the execution of Z A Bhutto was triggered by the same country. If the US and some friendly peoples are arrayed against each other, we should not be taking sides with Washington. A more prudent course would have been to leave the two parties to sort it out, though American record in shielding the deposed bloody dictators of the Third World, who stashed away billions of their nation's money in Western banks, does not do it very proud. In the light of its own past, America would have no moral ground to blame us if we refused to hand over person who has done us no harm. However, to by pass all normal formalities and legal requirements is difficult to understand much less support.

Ramzi Plan To Bomb Israeli Missions in India Noted

BK1202091495 Islamabad PAKISTAN in Urdu 12 Feb 95 pp 1,7

[Article by Hamid Mir]

[FBIS Translated Text] Islamabad. Ramzi Ahmad Yusuf, who was involved in the bombing of the World Trade Center in New York, was to trigger bomb blasts in India within a few days. It has been learned that the Israeli Consulate in Bombay and the Israeli Embassy in New Delhi were Ramzi's targets. Earlier, his name also figured in the bomb blasts at the Israeli embassies in London and Argentina. Highly-informed sources say that Ramzi Ahmad Yusuf also had contacts with the Afghan mojahedin and Kashmiri freedom fighters and was hiding in the surrounding areas of Peshawar for quite some time. A few days ago, he sent some of his companions to Thailand from where they were supposed to go to Bombay and New Delhi. Ramzi Ahmad Yusuf also was about to go to Thailand. He had to complete his mission after reaching India. It is to be noted that after the arrest of Ramzi Ahmad Yusuf, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Rabin Raphel stated before a Congressional subcommittee that there is no evidence of Pakistan's assistance to Kashmiri militants.

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